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IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

LET it be made plain, in the beginning, that the dear Lord had nothing to do with it, for the doors of that poor heart were fast closed against him, and the benighted child within trembled, ever trembled, to hear Love's timid knocking: such, gentle reader, is the teaching of gray seas and a bleak coast, — the voice of thunder is a voice of warning, but the waving of the new-blown blossom, where the sunlight falls upon it, is a lure to damnation. It was not the dear Lord: it was the Lord God A'mighty, — a fantastic misconception, the work of the blind minds of men, which has small part with mercy and the high leading of love. Men's imaginations, being untutored and unconfined, fashion queer gods of the stuff the infinite contains. When they roam afar, — as from bleak places, where no yellow fields, no broad, waving acres, yielding bounteously, make love manifest to the children of men, nor do vaulted forests all reverberant to the wind's solemn strains inspire souls to deeper longing, — when they roam afar, it may be, the gods they fetch back are terrible gods. In Ragged Harbor, which is a cleft in the New-foundland upper shore, some men have fashioned a god of rock and tempest and the sea's rage, — a gigantic, frowning shape, throned in a mist, whereunder black waters curl and hiss, and are cold and without end; and in the right hand of the shape is a flaming rod of chastisement, and on either side of the

throne sit grim angels, with inkpots and pens, who jot down the sins of men, relentlessly spying out their innermost hearts; and behind the mist, far back in the night, the flames of pain, which are forked and writhing and lurid, light up the clouds and form an aureole for the shape, and provide him with his halo. No, it was not the dear Lord who had to do with the case of Nazareth Lute of Ragged Harbor, — not the Lord who lives in melting hearts and therefrom compassionately proceeds to the aid and comfort of all the sons of men, even as it is written: it was merely the Lord God A'mighty.

Now, the father of this Lute, old Richard Lute, of the path to Squid Cove, where it rounds the Man-o'-War, called his first-born, Nazareth, and changed his own name to Jesus when he was converted, believing it to be no sin, but, indeed, a public confession of old transgressions and new faith, — a deed of high merit, which might counterbalance even so much as the past unrighteousness of putting more sea water than lobsters in the cans he had traded with Luke Dart, and would so be counted unto him when he stood on the waters at the foot of the throne and the dread account was put in his hand. "If it goas agin them lobsters on the Lord God A'mighty's bill," he told the people, "'t will do. If it oan'y goas agin the lobsters, b'y," he said to young Solomon Stride, "maybe, — maybe, b'y, — I'll

have a balance t' me favor, an' I 'll slip through the pearly gate. 'T were a clever thought, b'y, changin' me name, — iss, 't were; iss, 't were!" Thereafter, Jesus Lute lived righteously, according to the commands of his God; but he died mad: because, as it has been said, and I do verily believe, he dwelt overmuch on those things which are eternal, — wondering, wondering, wondering, in sunlight and mist and night, off shore in the punt, laboring at the splitting table, spreading fish on the flake, everywhere, wondering all the while whither souls took their flight. So much of Richard Lute: and it must be said, too, that the mother of this Nazareth was of a piety exceeding deep. She was famed in seven harbors for her glory fits, — for her visions and prophecies and strange healings, — and from seven harbors folk came for to see, when it was noised abroad that a glory fit was upon her or at hand: to see and to hear, and to interrogate the Lord God A'mighty concerning the time and manner of death, for it was believed that the Lord God A'mighty spoke with her lips at such times.

"But it gets the weather o' me how that b'y comes by his wickedness," said old Solomon Stride, when Nazareth had grown to be a man. "It do get the weather o' me. He 've a gun'le load of it — sure he have."

"They was nar a sinful hair to his mother's head," asserted Priscilla, Solomon's wife.

"Sure, noa, dear," said Solomon. "Nor yet ar a one to his fawther's — when he had ar a one, afore he cap-sized, poor mortal; which he had n't t' the madhouse t' Saint John's, they says, 'cause he just would tear un out, an' they was noa such thing as his heavin' to."

"'T is queer," replied Priscilla thoughtfully. "But they be lots o' things that 's queer — about religion," she added, with a sigh, and plucking at her apron. "An his mother were oan'y

here t' have a glory fit, us might find out — find out" —

"What might us find out, dear?"

"Sh-h-h! They be things about Heaven 't is not for we t' know."

"'T is true; but the dear Lord is wise — wise an' kind, noa matter what some poor folk trys t' make un out."

"The Lord God 's the Lord God A'mighty," said Priscilla quickly, speaking in fear.

"I 'low he 'm better 'n us thinks," added Solomon, looking into the depths of the sunset.

"Solomon, b'y," urged Priscilla, "I fear me you 'll be a-sittin' in the seat o' the scorner afore long."

"Noa, dear," said Solomon. "Noa, noa!"

To be sure, the wickedness of Nazareth Lute was of a most lusty, lively character: not a dullard, shiftless wickedness, which contents itself with an unkempt beard, a sleep in the sunshine, and a maggoty punt. It was a wickedness patent to all the folk of Ragged Harbor: so, only the unrighteous, who are wise in a way, and the children, who are all-wise, loved him; and it may be that the little people loved him for one of his sins — the sin of unfailing jollity, in which he was steeped. His beard, which was curly and fair and rooted in rosy flesh, and his voice, which was deep and throbbing, and his blue eye, which flashed fire in the dusk, were, each in its way, all wicked: the hearts of the maids fluttered and told them so when he came near. The poise of his head and his quick, bold glance proclaimed him devil-may-care; and his saucy wit and irreverence put the matter beyond all doubt. His very gait — his jaunty, piratical roll down the Old Crow Road — was a flouting of the Lord God A'mighty, before whom, as Uncle Simon Luff has it, men should bear themselves as "wrigglin' worms." He wickedly gloried in his strength, — in the breadth and height and might of himself: ever

forgetting, as Uncle Simon said, that the "grass withereth, an' the tall trees is laid low." In boyhood, his ambitions were all wicked; for he longed to live where he could go to the theatre, of the glittering delights of which he had read in a tract, and to win money at cards, of which he had read in another. Later, his long absences and riotous returns were wicked; his hip pocket bulged with wickedness for a week after he came ashore from the mail boat, and for the same week his legs wickedly wobbled, and the air was tainted with wickedness where he breathed. The deeds he did on his cruises were wicked, in truth, — ever more deeply wicked: wicked past conception to the minds of men who do not know the water fronts of cities, nor have imagined the glaring temptations which there lie in wait.

"They's a spring o' sin in the innards o' that there b'y," said Uncle Simon Luff, "an' 't will never run dry 'til the fires o' hell sap un up."

When Nazareth Lute was thirty-two years old, he came ashore from the mail boat one night in spring, after long absence from Ragged Harbor; and he was sober, and very solemn. He went straight to his father's house, on the Squid Cove path, where he now lived alone; and there he remained until the evening of the next day, which was the Sabbath. When Sammy Arnold tolled the bell he set out for the meeting-house in his punt, observing which, many people went to church that night. At the after-meeting, for which, curiously, everybody waited, Nazareth stood up, the first of all: whereupon there was a rustle, then a strained hush, which filled the little place, even to the shadows where the rafters were.

"O friends," he began, in a dry, faltering voice, "I come here, the night, — I come here, where I were barn an' raised, — t' this here ha'bor where I warked on me fawther's flake, as a wee

child, an' kept the head of his punt up t' the wind many a day on the Grapplin' Hook grounds, as a lad, an' jiggled squid for his bait many a sunset time after the capelin school was gone off shore, — here, where I were a paddle punt fisherman on me own hook, as a man, — I come here, O friends, the night," his voice now rising tremulously, "t' tell all you folk how my poor soul were saved from the damnation o' the Lard God A'mighty." He stopped to wet his lips, and to gulp, for lips and throat were dried out; then he went on, the light of conviction burning ever brighter in his eyes: "O friends, I've been standin' on the brink o' hell these many year, all afire o' the stinkin' flames o' sin, as you knows; an' the warnin's o' the Lard God A'mighty, hisself, which he sent me in three wrecks an' the measles, was like the shadow o' some small cloud, — like a shadow a-runnin' over the sea; for the shadow passes quickly, an' the sea is the same as he were afore. (Amen, an' Amen, O Lard!) Likewise, O friends, was the warnin's o' God A'mighty t' my poor soul," he went on, his voice of a sudden charged with the tearful quality of humiliation, "'til Toosday, a week gone, at six o'clock, or thereabouts, in the marnin'. The day afore that, O friends, I were bound out from Saint John's t' Twillingate, in ballast o' salt, along o' Skipper Peter Alexander Bull, an' a crew o' four hands, which is some'at short-handed for Skipper Peter Alexander's schooner, as you all knows. (O Lard!) When we was two hours out the skipper he got drunk; an' the cook, which was Jonathan Bluff, from this here ha'bor, he were drunk a'ready, as I knows, for I lent a hand t' stow un away when he come aboard; an' when the skipper he got drunk, an' the cook he were drunk a'ready, James Thomson and William Cole they got drunk, too, for they was half drunk an' knowed noa better." They were now all listening enrapt;

and from time to time they broke into exclamations, as they were moved by Nazareth's dramatic recital. "So I were the oan'y able hand aboard o' she," the man went on, speaking hoarsely, as though again in terror of the thing he did, "an' I says t' myself, though I had the wheel, O friends (Lard, Lard!), I said t' myself, which was sunk in iniquity, an' knowed not the heaviness o' sin (Save un, O Lard, save un!), says I, 'I might's well be drunk, too.' So I goas down t' the fo'cas'le, O friends, an' in the fo'cas'le I gets me dunnybag (O Lard!), an' from the dunnybag I takes a bottle (O Lard, O Lard!), an' out o' the bottle I draws the stopper (O Lard A'mighty!), an' I raises the bottle t' me lips (Stop un, O Lard!), an' — an' — I gets drunk, then an' there; so then the schooner she were in the hands o' the wind, which it were blowin' so light as a'most nothin' from the sou'east, an' we was well off shore."

Nazareth paused. He raised his right arm, and looked up, as though in supplication. His head dropped over his breast, and he was still silent; so the old parson began this hymn: —

"When, rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelm'd with guilt and fear,
I see my Maker face to face,
Oh, how shall I appear?"

"If yet, while pardon may be found
And mercy may be sought,
My heart with inward horror shrinks
And trembles at the thought,

"When thou, O Lord, shalt stand disclosed,
In majesty severe,
And sit in judgment on my soul,
Oh, how shall I appear?"

With him all the people sang, from the shrill-voiced young to the quavering, palsied old, — sang with joyful enthusiasm, as they who have escaped great terror.

"In the night," Nazareth went on, "I hears a noise; so I said, 'What's that?' The skipper he woke up, an'

says, 'T is a rat.' 'T was n't, though; but I falls asleep once moare, an' when I wakes up in the marnin' I be all a-shakin' and blinded by the liquor, an' I sees queer streaks o' green an' yellow in the air. So I goas on deck, an' there I sees that the schooner do be rubbin' her nose fair agin Yellow Rock, by the tickle t' Seldom Cove; an' she've wrecked her bowsprit, an' she've like t' stove a hoale in her port side. But the sea is all ripplin', an' they is hardly noa wind; so she pounds easy." Nazareth looked up to the grimy rafters overhead, and the words following he addressed to the Lord his God, his voice thrilling as his soul's exaltation increased: "An' I looked up, an' I sees you, O Lard God A'mighty, sittin' on the top o' Yellow Rock; an' your cloathes do be spun o' fog, an' your face is hid from me. Iss, O Lard, you was a-lookin' down on me; an' you sings out, O Lard, 'Nazareth Lute,' you sings out, 'repent!' But behind the cloud which hid your face, like a veil, O Lard God A'mighty, I knowed you was a-frownin'; an' I were scared, an' said nar a word. 'Nazareth Lute,' you sings out agin, 'repent afore you're lost!' But I were still scared, O Lard God A'mighty, for the light o' the cloud went out, an' it were black, like the first cloud of a great starm.

Nazareth Lute,' you says for the third time, 'repent afore you're hove into the fires o' hell!' Then the cloud shivered, like when the wind tears un t' bits; an' my voice come t' me, an' I says, 'Iss, Lard, I will.'" Turning once more to the people, Nazareth said: "Then I sings out, 'All hands on deck!' But the crew was drunk an' did not come; an' when I looked up again t' Yellow Rock, the Lard was gone from that place. So I soused the hands with buckets o' water, O friends; an' over the head o' the skipper I slushed three of un, for he were the drunkest of all. So when they was sober agin we set sail, an' the Lard sent

us a fair time, an' we come safe t' Twillingate. The fight do be over for me, O friends, — the long, long fight I fought with sin. 'Tis over now, — all over; an' I've come t' peace. For I found the Lard God A'mighty a-sittin' there on Yellow Rock, by the tickle t' Seldom Cove, a-frownin' in a cloud."

That was the manner of the conversion of Nazareth Lute; and thereafter he lived righteously, even as his father had lived, according to the commands of the Lord God A'mighty, his God, whom he had fashioned of tempest and rock and the sea's rage, with which his land had abundantly provided him. Thereafter he lived righteously; but his eyes were blinded to all those beauties, both great and small, which the dear Lord has strewn in hearts and places, in love withholding not; and his ears were stopped against the tender whisperings which twilight winds waft with them, from the infinite to the infinite: for it was as though the cloud and flame of the wrath of his God, following after, cast a shadow before him, and filled the whole earth with the thunder and roar and crackling of their pursuit. Thereupon, indeed, he became a fisherman again, and thereafter he lived righteously: for he did thereafter not do many things which he had been used to doing. All the maids with dimpled cheeks and all the children knew that he put the sin of jollity far from him. Also, it is told to this day, when men speak of righteous lives, how that he hung his last clay pipe from a rafter, and looked upon it morning and evening, after prayer, to remind himself that sensual delights, such as are contained in the black, cracked bowls of pipes, are like snares set for the souls of the unwary. Moreover, it can be proved how that once, when he could not take the punt to his nets on a Saturday night, the wind being high, he freed all the fish on Monday morning,

freed them all, the quintal upon quintal of gleaming fish in the trap; more, then and there in the nets by chance, than the Lord God A'mighty had granted to his labor all that summer through; but, thereby, he saved himself from the charge of desecrating the Sabbath in permitting his nets to work on that day, which the grim angels were waiting to note down against him, and he gained greatly in humility and in strength against temptation. He lived righteously: for, as he fled the wrath of his God, the cloud and flame were close behind; and at the end of the toilsome path, as upon the crest of a long hill, was set the City of Light and the gates of the City, wherethrough men passed to a shiny splendor.

"I been thinkin', b'y," he said to Solomon Stride, at the time of one blood-red sunset, when their punts were side by side coming in from the Mad Mull grounds, "that I doan't know as I'll want one o' they golden harps."

"Sure, an' why not, b'y?" Solomon called over the purpling water.

"I doan't know as I will," said Nazareth, "for I were never much of a hand at the jew's-harp. 'T will be gran' for you, b'y. You was always a wonderful hand at that, an' the harp o' gold 'll come easy t' l'arn. Sure, you 'll pick un up in a day. But with me 't is different. I — I — can't so much 's whistle a hymn, Solomon. Noa, b'y, I doan't know as I'll want one o' they harps; but if they 's a sea there, b'y, they 's fish in it; an' if the sea 's gold, the fish 's gold; an' 't is like, b'y, they 'll be hooks as well as harps, an' maybe a trap an' a seine or two. An' if they 's" —

"You is all wrong about Heaven," said Solomon. "They 's noa eatin', there, Nazareth."

"'T is true, b'y, maybe — iss, maybe 't is," said Nazareth, in all humility admitting the possibility of error. "'T would be hard eatin', whatever. But, maybe," with a reflective frown,

"they's a queer kind o' teeth comes with the new body. Oh, well, whatever," with a sigh, "I doan't know what I'll do when I gets there — sure an' I doan't."

"You'll take a grip on a harp, b'y," Solomon cried enthusiastically, "an' you'll swing your flipper over the golden strings, an' " —

"Noa, noa! 'T would be a sinful waste o' good harps for the Lard God A'mighty t' put one in my hands. I'd break un sure."

"But he've a great heap o' them, an' he'd " —

"Noa, noa! "

"But he'd l'arn you, b'y; he'd l'arn you t' " —

"Noa, b'y — noa. 'T would be too tough a job, an' I would n't put the Lard God A'mighty t' the trouble o' that. Noa, noa; if they's noa fish in that there sea, I doan't know what I'll do when I gets there. I doan't know what I'll do, Solomon. I doan't know what I'll do — all the time."

Nazareth Lute thought that a man should either search diligently for things to do in the last light of day, or be cast down when there was no work about the cottage, the punt, or the flake. He should look to the condition of the capelin in the loft, or gather soil for a new potato patch: in his sight the sin of idleness was like a clog to the neck of one who traveled the road to the City of Light — the idleness of half-hours after sunset, it may be, when the fish were split, and the unrighteous rested, and the wicked had their way. One winter, when he had mended his cod trap and knitted a herring seine and a new salmon net, he set out to whittle the model of a schooner, thinking to sell it to Manuel of Burnt Arm, who builded five schooners every year, and give the money to the church, to the end that, at last, Ragged Harbor might be in a fair way toward having a parson all to herself. So he whittled, and whittled,

and whittled away; and while the wood took form under his fingers, even as he, himself, directed, yielding to his veriest whims, and gave promise of that grace and strength which he, alone of all the world, had conceived, a new, flooding joy came to him, — such happiness as he had not hoped for on earth or in heaven. He whittled the drear days through, and, in the night, while the wind swept the hills and flung snow against the panes, he sat long in the leaping fire-light, whittling still, bending ever closer over the forming thing in his hands, creeping ever nearer to the expiring blaze, and dreaming great dreams all the while. In this work his soul found vent; even, it may be said, a touch of the tiny hull — a soft, lingering touch in the night — gave a comfort which neither prayer nor fasting, nor any other thing, could bring to his unrest; and, soon, his last waking thought was not of the Lord God A'mighty, his God, as it had been, nor yet of a yawning hell, but of the thing which his hands were forming. And when the model was polished and mounted, which was in that spring when old Simon Luff's last grandson was born, he did not sell it to Manuel of Burnt Arm; for he wanted to know of his own knowledge, when he saw the craft afloat, that the builder had brought her promise to its perfect fulfillment. So he determined to build her himself. She would be, he told himself, the work of his own hands: and the work would be good. In the summer he toiled hard at the fishing, and in the winter following he cut timber in the inland woods, and hauled it out with the dogs; and in three years he had the keel laid and two of the ribs set in place.

"Solomon, b'y," he confided to Solomon Stride, in a dark whisper, once, "she'll be the best sixty-tonner ever sailed these seas — once I get her done."

"She'll be overlong in buildin', I be thinkin'," said Solomon.

"Oh, I doan't know 's she will," Nazareth made reply. "'T will be a matter o' twelve year, maybe. But once I get she done, Solomon — once I get she out o' the tickle in a switch from the nor'east — once I doos, b'y, she 'll be a cracker t' goa! Iss, an' she will."

"Iss, an' I hope so," said Solomon. "But her keel 'll rot afore this time twelve year."

"Iss, maybe," said Nazareth. "I be 'lowin' for a rotten keel. Iss, I be 'lowin' t' use up two keels on this here craft."

One day, old Uncle Simon Luff, rowing in from the grounds with but two fish to show for the day's jiggling, turned his punt into the little cove where Nazareth was at work, and came ashore.

"They tells me," said he, "that you be goain' t' use galvanized nails for she," with a side nod toward the schooner.

Nazareth's adze fell twice upon the timber he was dubbing. "Iss," said he. "I be goain' t' use galvanized nails. 'T is true."

"They tells me 't will cost a wonderful sight moare."

"I calc'late \$76.80 for nails, b'y," said Nazareth, as his adze fell again, "which is — ugh! — as you says — ugh! — a wonderful sight moare 'n — ugh! — wrought nails."

Uncle Simon sat down on the keel. "What do you 'low for your spars, b'y?" he asked.

Nazareth spat on his hands, and answered while he rubbed the horny palms together. "Well, b'y, I can't cut the spars single-handed, an' they's noa good timber in these parts," he said. "But I can get un t' Burnt Arm, an' I can tow un up with the punt: which it is but a matter o' twenty mile, as you knows. I 'low \$150 for a set, an' \$12 for a main boom, an' \$4 for three gaffs an' a topmast if I doan't cut un myself. But 't is a long time 'til I needs un."

"Nazareth," said Uncle Simon, "what do you 'low this schooner 'll cost you?"

Nazareth suspended the dubbing, and put a foot on the keel. "I be goain' t' make she a good schooner, Uncle Simon," he said solemnly. "So good a schooner as ever sailed out of a ha'bor. She 'll have twenty-five ribs to her body frame, which is five moare 'n Manuel's Duchess have; an' I be goain' t' brace her bows with oak for the ice. I be goain' t' give she four sets o' clamps, an' juniper top-sides, an' two an' a quarter inch ceiling planking; an' I 'll put a bolt where they's call for a bolt. She 'll have her suit o' sails from Saint John's, an' I 'll serve her standin' riggin', an' when it comes t' caulking I 'll horse her. Uncle Simon, b'y, I 'low \$767 for her timber, an' I 'low \$550 for iron an' nails an' oakum an' windlass an' harse pipes an' all they things; an' 't will cost me \$1200 t' fit she out, 'lowin' I can get three anchors an' some likely chain for \$250, an' rope enough for \$80, an' a set o' blocks for \$100, an' the suit o' sails I wants for \$400. Maybe, Simon, countin' in me own labor an' what little I hire at \$900, an' gettin' me smithy wark done t' Burnt Arm for \$250, she 'll cost me \$3500 afore I take she out o' the tickle for t' try she. Simon," he concluded, his voice a-thrill with deep purpose, "she 'll be the best sixty-tonner what ever sailed these seas!"

"Nazareth," said Simon, "can you do it, b'y?"

"Iss, Simon, if the Lard God A'mighty sends the seals in the spring an' a reasonable sign o' fish in season, I 'll do it. If the Lard God A'mighty leaves me take \$200 out o' the sea each year — if he oan'y doos that — I 'll sail she this spring come twelve year."

"'T is a deal t' expect," urged Simon, shaking his head. "S'pose the Lard cuts you down t' \$150?"

Nazareth scratched his head in a perplexed way. "I 'd sail she, I s'pose,"

he said, "this spring come eighteen year."

"Maybe," said Simon, for he had looked back through the years he had lived. "A man can do a good spell o' wark — in a life. But you 're lookin' poor an' lean, b'y," he added. "Eat moare," now rising to go to his punt, "an' you 'll get a wonderful sight moare wark out o' yourself."

"Doos you think so?" asked Nazareth, looking up quickly, as though the suggestion were new and most striking.

"I knows it," said Uncle Simon.

"Maybe, now, you 're right," added Nazareth. "I 'll try it."

But at the end of twelve years, which was the time when Uncle Simon's last grandson was made a hand in the trap-skiff, the schooner was still on the stocks, though Nazareth Lute had near worn out his life with pinching and cruel work: for they were hard years, and the Lord God A'mighty, his God, had not generously rewarded the toil of men. Uncle Simon Luff, who was now surpassing old and gray, and, like a prophet, stood upon the holiness of past years, called upon the people to repent of their sins, that the Lord God A'mighty might be persuaded to withdraw his anger from them. "Yea, even," cried Uncle Simon, in one ecstasy at the meeting-house, "hunt out the Jonah among you, an' heave un out o' this here ha'bor!" Now, Nazareth Lute, believing that Uncle Simon had come to that holy age when the mouth may utter wisdom which the mind conceiveth not, searched his heart for sin, but found none: whereupon, he was greatly distressed, for he thought to appease the wrath of the Lord God A'mighty with repentance, that the Lord, his God, might grant the means to make the schooner ready for launching. Nevertheless, being exceeding anxious to purge his heart of such sins as may lurk in hearts all unsuspected, he put ashes on his head for three nights, when his fire went out; for with his whole

heart he longed for the Lord God A'mighty to restore his favor, that the schooner might some day be finished. And when, for three more years, the Lord God still frowned upon Ragged Harbor, he put no blame upon the Lord God A'mighty, his God, for scorning his poor propitiation, but, rather, blamed himself for having no sackcloth at hand with which to array himself.

"They 's a good sign o' fish t' Round Ha'bor," said Solomon Stride to Nazareth, in the beginning of that season, when the news first came down. "'T is like they 'll strike here. 'T will be a gran' catch o' fish this year, I'm thinkin'."

"Doos you think so, b'y?" said Nazareth, his face lighting up. "Solomon, b'y, if I can oan'y get me schooner done, — if I can oan'y get she done afore I dies, — I 'll not be much afeard t' face the Lard God A'mighty when I stands afore the throne."

"Noa, noa, lad — sure noa!"

"Solomon, when the Lard God A'mighty says t' me, 'Nazareth Lute, what has you got t' show for the life I give you?' I 'll say, 'O Lard God A'mighty,' I 'll say, 'I built the fastest sixty-tonner what ever sailed these seas.' An' he 'll say, 'Good an' faithful sarvent,' he 'll say, 'enter into thy reward, for you done well along o' that there schooner.' An' I been thinkin', o' late, Solomon," Nazareth went on, letting his voice fall to a confidential whisper, "that he 'll say a ward or two moare 'n that. Maybe," with a sweet, radiant smile, "he 'll say, 'Nazareth Lute,' he 'll say afore all the angels, 'I 'm proud o' you, b'y, — I 'm fair proud o' you.'"

"Iss, an' he will," said Solomon gently, for he perceived that the strain of toil and longing had somewhat weakened Nazareth for the time. "Sure, he 'll say them very words. I knows it."

"Maybe," said Nazareth; then, with a wise wag of his head: "'T is hard

t' tell for sure, though, just what the Lard God A'mighty will do. 'T is wonderful hard, I'm thinkin'."

"Iss, wonderful," said Solomon; "but 't is sure t' be done right."

When Uncle Simon Luff's last grandson had learned to loiter at the Needle Rock to make eyes at the maids as they passed, which was two years after the season of plenty, Nazareth Lute launched his schooner; and with prayer and psalm-singing and a pot of blackberry jam she was christened the Heavenly Hope. The days of tribulation, when the great fear of the wrath of the Lord God A'mighty descended upon Ragged Harbor, were over: again, with his whole heart, Nazareth Lute longed to lay a guiding hand upon the helm of the craft he had made, — to feel the thrill of her eager response to the touch of his finger. Day-dreams haunted him while he worked, — dreams of singing winds and a wake of froth, of a pitching, heeling flight over great waves, of swelling sails and of foam at the rail, of squalls escaped, and of gales weathered in the night. In these long, sunny days, when all the rocks of the harbor cheerily echoed the noise of hammer and saw, and the smell of oakum and paint and new wood was in the air to delight in, he was happy: for the cloud and flame of the wrath of the Lord God A'mighty, his God, were unperceived and forgotten. In these days, too, Uncle Simon Luff puttered about the deck, a querulous, flighty, tottering old child: and sometimes he fancied he was the master-builder of the schooner, and gave orders, which Nazareth pretended to obey; and sometimes he fancied she was at sea in a gale, and roared commands, at which times it was hard to soothe him to quiet. But Nazareth Lute delighted in the company and in the prattle, from sunny day to sunny day, while he rigged the boat: for he did not know that a revelation impended and might come by the lips

of old Simon Luff, — the inevitable, crushing revelation of his idolatrous departure from the one path of escape.

"Nazareth," said Uncle Simon crossly one day when Nazareth was caulking the forward deck planks, "I told you t' horse them planks, an' you is n't doin' it."

"Iss, I is, Uncle Simon, b'y," said Nazareth, looking up with a smile. "I be drivin' the oakum in thick an' tight."

"Noa, you is n't!" said Uncle Simon in a rage.

"Iss, b'y, sure" —

Uncle Simon sprung away. He straightened himself to his full stature and lifted up his right hand. His long white hair fell over his shoulders: his white beard quivered, and his eyes flashed, as the eyes of some indignant prophet might.

"Nazareth Lute," he cried, "you loves this here schooner moare 'n you loves the Lard God A'mighty!"

Nazareth's mallet clattered harshly on the deck. It had fallen from his grasp, for the strength had gone out of his hands. He rose, trembling.

"Take them wards back, Simon," he said hoarsely. "Take un back, b'y," he pleaded. "They is n't true."

"Iss, an' they is true," Simon grumbled. "This here schooner 's your golden calf. The Lard God A'mighty 'll punish you for lovin' she moare 'n you love him."

The cloud and flame of the wrath of the Lord God A'mighty seemed very near to Nazareth. In a dazed way he watched old Simon totter to the side and climb into his punt: watched him row out from the ship.

"Simon," he called earnestly, "say 't is n't true — what you said."

"'T is, an' 't is, an' can't be 't iser," said Simon.

Nazareth was struck a mortal blow.

When the light failed, that night, and there remained but the wan light

of the stars to guide the work of his hands, Nazareth Lute put aside his mallet and his oakum; and he stretched himself out on the forward deck, with his face upturned, that he might ponder again, in the night's silence, the words of Simon Luff: for Simon was old, very old and white-haired; and he had lived a long life without sin, as men knew, and had at last come to those days wherein strange inspirations and communications are vouchsafed to holy men. And Nazareth fell asleep — while from the stars to the shimmering water, and from the sea's misty rim to the first shrubs and shadows of the wilderness, the infinite hymned the praises of great works, he fell asleep; and while star and shadow and misty water still joined with the wilderness and great rocks in the enravishing strain, he dreamed a dream: a dream of the Lord God A'mighty, who appeared in a glowing cloud above him. Now, the words of the Lord God A'mighty, his God, whom he had made in his blindness of tempest and naked rock and the sea's hard wrath, I here, in all compassion for Nazareth Lute, set down as they were told by him to one who told them to me.

"Nazareth Lute!" said the Lord God A'mighty.

"Here I be, O Lard," said Nazareth Lute.

The glowing cloud was a cloud of changing colors, — of gold and purple and gray and all sunset tints: and, of a sudden, it melted from gold to gray.

"Nazareth Lute!" said the Lord God A'mighty.

Now, Nazareth Lute trembled exceedingly, for he knew that the Lord God A'mighty, his God, had come in wrath to reprove him for his idolatry; and he was afraid.

"Here I be, O Lard," he made answer.

But the Lord withheld his voice for a time, and Nazareth knew that he was frowning in the gray cloud.

"Nazareth Lute!" said the Lord God A'mighty, for the third time.

"Iss, Lard," said Nazareth Lute. "'T is Nazareth a-speakin'. Doos you not know me, Lard?"

"Oh, I knows you, never fear," said the Lord God A'mighty.

"Sure, you doos, O Lard," said Nazareth. "I been sarvin' you ever since that day I seen you sittin' on Yellow Rock, by the tickle t' Seldom Cove. You knows *me*, Lard."

Then a drear silence: and roundabout was deep night, but the light of the crimson cloud fell upon the shrouds, and upon the thrice-dubbed planks of the deck, and upon the mallet near by; so the man knew that he was yet upon the deck of his own schooner, and he was comforted.

"Scuttle this here fore-an'-after," said the Lord God A'mighty.

Now, for a time, Nazareth Lute had no voice to plead against the command of the Lord God A'mighty, for he knew that the words of the Lord stand forever.

"O Lard," he cried out, at last, "leave me sail she once — just once, O Lard God A'mighty!"

The cloud of changing colors hung in its place; but no words fell upon the waiting ears of Nazareth Lute.

"O Lard," he cried, "leave me put her sails on, an' sell she, an' give the money t' the church!"

But the cloud of changing colors made no answer: yet the very silence was an answer.

"O Lard," said Nazareth Lute, braving the anger of the Lord, "leave me keep she. Leave me let she ride at anchor an' rot — but leave me keep she by me."

Still the cloud of changing colors kept silence.

"O Lard," said Nazareth Lute, for his heart was breaking, and he no longer feared the wrath of the Lord God A'mighty, "'t is n't fair — sure, 't is n't fair. She've been well build-

ed, O Lard. She 'd be the best sixty-tonner in these parts. Why, O Lard, must I scuttle " —

"Nazareth Lute, does you hear me?"

"Iss, Lard; but " —

"Nazareth Lute," cried the Lord God A'mighty from the depths of the black cloud, "stop your prate! 'Tis not for wrigglin' worms t' know the mysteries o' the heaven an' o' the earth. An you doan't scuttle this here fore-an'-after, she'll wreck on her first v'y'ge, an' all hands 'll loss themselves. Mind that, Nazareth Lute!"

Whereupon, the cloud of changing colors vanished: and all things were as they had been when the daylight failed — from the stars to the shimmering water, and from the sea's misty rim to the first shrubs and shadows of the wilderness. But the hymn in praise of great works fell upon the ears of a numb soul.

Now, Nazareth Lute told no man what the Lord God A'mighty, his God, had commanded him to do: and, from year to year, continuing, he toiled early and late, as he had done before, that his schooner might be a great and perfect work before he died; but he dreamed no more dreams of swelling sails and a wake of froth. On the night when Uncle Simon Luff's last grandson's first child was born, which was long after Uncle Simon's feet had grown used to the streets of the City of Light, as men said, Nazareth went to Solomon Stride's cottage, under the Man-o'-War, to talk a while; for old Solomon lay ill abed, and Nazareth's work was done. The shadows were then stealing out of the wilderness upon the heels of the sun's red glory: and behind lurked the dusk and a clammy mist.

"Draw the curtains back, b'y," said Solomon. "Leave us see the sun sink in the sea. 'T is a gran' sight."

The rim of the sea was a flaring red and gold: a great, solemn glory filled all the sky.

"They tells me," said Solomon, after a time, "that you got the suit o' sails from Saint John's by the last mail boat."

"Iss, b'y," said Nazareth. "I fitted un on, a week gone Toosday. Me wark's done, b'y. The schooner's finished. She've been lyin' off Mad Mull for five days — over fifteen fathom o' water at low tide."

"She've been well builded, Nazareth. She've been well builded."

"Iss — the best sixty-tonner in these parts. I made she that, Solomon, as I said I would."

"Looks like us 'll have a switch from the nor'east the morrow," said Solomon, turning from the sunset. "'T is like you 'll try she then."

"Noa, Solomon."

"'T will be a gran' wind, I'm thinkin', b'y."

But, while the gloaming shadows gathered over the harbor water, Nazareth told Solomon Stride of the vision in which the Lord God A'mighty, his God, had appeared to him: and when he was done, the dusk had driven the flush of pink in upon the sun and was pressing upon the red and gold at the edge of the world.

"'T were not the Lard a-speakin'!" Solomon cried. "'T were not, b'y — 't were not!"

"Doos you think not, Solomon?" said Nazareth softly. "But you forgets about the sacrifice an' propitiation for sin."

"'T were n't the Lard," said Solomon.

"You forgets, Solomon," said Nazareth, in all simplicity, "that I seed the Lard once afore, a-sittin' there on Yellow Rock. Iss, b'y, I seed un once afore, an' now I knows un when I sees un. 'T were he, b'y — iss, 't were."

"'T were not the Lard said them wards," said Solomon.

"You forgets, Solomon," said Nazareth, "that the Lard God A'mighty sung out t' Abraham, one day, an' told

un t' offer up Isaac as a burnt offerin'. T' offer up his son, Solomon — t' offer up his *son*. He've oan'y asked a schooner o' me."

"Iss, Nazareth, he done that," said Solomon. "But he sent an angel in time t' save that poor lad's life: which were what he intended t' do, all the time."

"Iss," said Nazareth, as in a dream, "he sent an angel."

The night, advancing swiftly, thrust the last sunset color over the rim of the sea; and it was dark.

"Solomon," said Nazareth, "for four nights I been on the deck o' that there schooner, watchin' for the angel o' the Lard, but none come. Solomon," he faltered, "I been waitin', an' waitin', an' waitin', but the Lard God A'mighty sends noa angel — t' me."

"Did the new day come?" said Solomon earnestly, lifting himself on his elbow.

"Iss, the new day come."

"Seems t' me, Nazareth," said Solomon, "that the dear Lard peeps out o' every dawn t' bless us poor folk."

"Noa, noa," Nazareth groaned; "the

Lard God A'mighty was not in them dawns, nor yet the angel o' the Lard; for I kep' a sharp lookout, an' I'd 'a' seed un if they was there. Noa, noa, b'y," he went on, speaking with rising firmness, "he've asked a sacrifice o' me, an' he means t' have me make it. She've been fitted out with all the things she needs — to her cask-dipper, b'y, an' her buzzie an' anchor-light. I've painted her sides, an' swabbed down her deck, an' made she all neat an' trim an' shipshape. She's all ready t' be offered up — all ready, now. I'm fair sad t' think — but — I'm goain' t' " —

"What do it all matter?" said Solomon, falling back on his pillow, wearied out. "What do it matter so 's a man trys t' please the dear Lard in all he doos?"

"Iss, Solomon," said Nazareth, "what do it all matter, so 's a man oan'y saves his soul from the fires o' hell?"

And Nazareth went out: and in that night he scuttled his schooner, even as he believed the Lord God A'mighty, his God, had commanded him to do.

Norman Duncan.

THE REVIVAL OF POETIC DRAMA.

It is probably safe to say that since the days of Shirley, that is, since the experience of men who might have known Shakespeare, the present is the first occasion upon which two dramatic poems, of real and high literary merit, by the same author, have enjoyed runs of success at the same time upon the London stage. Even although Mr. Stephen Phillips should prove to be one of those swallows who do not make a summer, and although poetic drama should once more sink into desuetude, the vogue of his beautiful plays will remain a cheering landmark in the history of our literature.

It will encourage us to go on hoping, even though such a triumph should not occur again for another two hundred and fifty years. But it is impossible in the flush of his very interesting experiments to take a view relatively so gloomy as this. We prefer to believe, and we are justified in hoping, that the perennial yearning for beauty and harmony and mystery, which is embodied in the heart even of the London playgoer, may be so fostered and fed by Ulysses and by Paolo and Francesca that it will not be content in future to be persistently snubbed and silenced as it has been in the past.

It seems worth while to consider, from a perfectly common-sense point of view, what is the reason of the difficulty which English poets have hitherto found in making their verse listened to with enjoyment on the stage. That in some countries poetry and large bodies of pleasure-seekers are able to shake hands across the footlights is absolutely certain. We have only to look at France, where the tragedies of Corneille and Racine — which are nothing if they are not poetry — have delighted successive generations, without intermission, since the very time, when we, in England, began to find stage poetry so difficult as to be practically impossible. If gay, social, and lively people, in large, recurrent numbers, can still be induced to sit, breathless, through five-act tragedies of elaborately rhymed poetry, like *Le Cid* and *Phèdre*, appreciating the drama thoroughly, and no whit impeded by the harmonies of the exquisite verse, it is plain that there can be no necessary divorce between a poem and the stage. But we are told that France, and Scandinavia with its saga-dramas, and Germany with its Schiller and Goethe, and Italy from Politian down to d'Annunzio are not England or America, and that there is something radically offensive to the Anglo-Saxon playgoer in drama that has pure literary form. Well, then, let us keep our inquiry to England and see what the facts are.

Before we consider what actors like Betterton and Garrick and Macready did or tried to do in the ages which preceded Mr. Beerbohm Tree, and what struggles dramatic poetry made during the two centuries and a half while the green-room waited for Mr. Phillips, it may be desirable to combat one or two fallacies. To the commonest argument against poetic drama, namely, that people go to the theatre for an amusement which is almost infantile in its simplicity, an entertainment which takes them out of themselves without strain or responsibility or

effort of any kind, the reply which I would make is to resign the contention without a struggle. I would admit it to be true that eighty per cent of those who go to the play, go there because it is a "play," because the lights, and the music, and the pretty women, and the bright illusions help them to "get through" the evening; because they have worked too hard and are worried, or have eaten too much food and are comatose, or have risked too much money and are anxious; and because they want, not an intellectual stimulus, but a physical and moral sedative. This is a fact, and in our modern existence it is not likely to diminish in importance. There will always be this eighty per cent who take their theatre as if it were morphia, or at least as if it were a glass of champagne. When we ask for a revival of poetic drama, we do not forget the numerical importance of this class, or its limited powers of endurance. We propose that it should continue to be catered for. But we suggest that the residue, the twenty per cent, are now strong enough to insist on being catered for also.

Another fallacy, it appears to me, is that poetry on the stage must be so lofty and pompous a thing, so pharisaical, so dictatorial, that common ears are stunned by its sermons or glutted by its imagery and its diction. We have allowed ourselves to accept the notion that poetic drama must not be expected to give pleasure, but only instruction and intellectual stimulus. There is an idea that it is connected with "examinations," that it may involve a university professor holding forth on the stage between the acts. For my own part, I am one of those who are not averse to a serious moral purpose on the stage. Quite occasionally, I can listen to a sermon from the footlights, and I have never been able to understand why a "problem" play — which is purely and simply a play which excites difference of opinion regarding a moot point in morals —

should be considered so detestable and make the critics so excessively angry. I confess I believe it to be these latter gentlemen, and not the real public, who bridle so much at the idea that some one is trying to preach to them in the theatre. But we are not dealing with "problem" plays to-day; we are speaking of "poetic" dramas of love and adventure and romance, written in fine verse by distinguished poets, and able to be enjoyed as literature even in the absence of scenery and lights and the glamour of the actresses. It has certainly been our error to make this class of play too grandiloquent and too remote from human interests. Success awaits the poet who will bring on to the boards the real flush and glow of fancy, with perfect dignity, yet in such a simple fashion that every one can without difficulty follow and appreciate.

Until the closure of the theatres under the Commonwealth it may be said that no distinction between vulgar and poetic drama had been conceived. Whenever a play was at all carefully composed, it contained some concession to literary effect. For instance, the late and very popular comedy of *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, a piece quite on a level with a topical farce of our own day, is written in loose, colloquial prose without any ambition. Yet, even here, when a touch of sentiment is required, or the attention of the audience is to be concentrated, the language braces itself up, and falls into a blank verse march. In fact, so paramount was the literary tradition of the drama, that after the playhouses were shut up by the Puritans, plays went on being written and printed, in which everything was more and more recklessly sacrificed to what was supposed to be poetry, and by 1650 no one in England could any longer write a drama which a conceivable troupe of actors could have played. This, to my mind, was the origin of the deep-seated prejudice to poetic drama in England; it was dimly felt to

have been an element in the violent death of the stage.

When the theatres began to be opened again, just before the Restoration, something of the exterior form of poetic drama clung for a long time to the fashionable play. Taste has altered so completely that it is very difficult for us to realize that the full-bottomed tragedies and tragi-comedies of Dryden's day, in pompous rhyme, with stately soliloquizing addressed to passive confidants, gave poetic pleasure. They give no sort of enjoyment to the majority of modern readers. But some fifteen years ago I had the great satisfaction of being present when Dryden's *Secret Love*: or *The Maiden Queen* was very sympathetically and gracefully given, on a single night, by a company of young professional actors, and I was surprised to perceive how much of the perfume and dignity of poetry lingered around these old, rejected rhymes of 1668. Now, when everybody has been crowding to Mr. Phillips's plays, it may seem odd to say that I recall no performance of which that of *Herod* has so sharply reminded me as this of Dryden's *Maiden Queen*. In a sense — not our sense, indeed, but that of their own age — the playgoers of Charles II. and James II. were votaries of the poetic drama, and possessed, in a bastard and impure form, something of its magnificent tradition.

If I were reviewing Mr. Phillips's talent, in detail, I should have something to say about what appears to me to be the invitation which it gives him to the composition of opera. I will here only pause to suggest that as the vulgarization of drama, at the close of the seventeenth century, became complete, it was only in the masques and operas written for the music of Purcell that poetry survived. We have seen the opera of *Dido* and *Æneas* performed in London within the last few months, and there has certainly appeared no other work on the recent stage with which Ulysses could be so

fairly compared. It is true that the verse of Dido and Æneas is by Nahum Tate, and is mainly contemptible; but here is the attitude, here the tradition, here the last breath of the Renaissance spirit of English poetic drama, and this was lost, as it seems to me, for two hundred years, to be restored, almost as it dropped from the hands of Dryden and Betterton and Purcell, by the combined talents of Mr. Beerbohm Tree and Mr. Stephen Phillips.

From the end of the seventeenth century onward, what we observe in the history of the English stage is the growing determination of audiences to be given what they like rather than what the author likes, and an equally steady decline of the level of popular taste until the author is utterly discouraged, and cares no longer to do his best. But it is very interesting to note how, again and again, one group of persons of taste, strenuously working together, has contrived for a moment to force poetic drama on the boards again. The earliest and the most remarkable instance of this in the eighteenth century was the performance of Addison's *Cato*. Again I must repeat that in this consideration we must not be affected by our twentieth-century attitude toward a particular work. We cannot read *Cato* with enjoyment, we do not, in fact, read *Cato* at all, but in the sense in which we are now using the phrase it was, to its own time, "poetic drama" precisely as *Midsummer Night's Dream* was to the age of Elizabeth or *Paolo and Francesca* to the age of Edward VII. What contemporaries said that they admired in it was the "beauty of poetry which shines through the whole." They accepted it as a protest against the humdrum vulgarity into which stage-writing had fallen. Here, at least, in *Cato* nothing was sacrificed to the groundlings; here, at least, was the dignity of versified literature supported as completely as the genius of a most elegant writer could contrive. Yet, with all

its prestige, with all the thunders of applause, with all the political and literary influence concentrated on its encouragement, *Cato* proved, in the long run, a colossal failure.

The reasons why *Cato* failed should, I think, be studied by any one who seeks to understand why poetic drama has been doomed so long to penitence and exile. It is absolutely useless — it was useless in 1713, it will be useless in 1913 — to invite a well-dressed crowd, of both sexes, who have dined, to sit through a whole evening listening to declamatory dialogue in which "chill philosophy" is discussed in terms of "unaffected elegance." Even when Addison's tragedy was first produced, under the auspices of such a claque as modern times have never seen, of such a crowd of illustrious and servile admirers as might turn our most practiced "log-roller" green with envy, — even then criticism uttered the fatal judgment, "deficiency of dramatic business." We shall find, if we examine in succession all the splendid failures which lie, like wrecked carracks laden with spice and pearl, on the shores of our dramatic literature, that this is the reef on which, one after the other, each of them has struck. They have been convinced that fine sentiments, showy literature, melodious versification, a fund of brilliant fancy, would save their credit if they could only secure an audience of sympathetic and cultivated people, and not one has understood that all the poetic ornament in the world will not redeem that fatal deficiency, the lack of "dramatic business."

The example of *Cato* was followed at intervals, and with the closest exactitude, all down the eighteenth century. The next effort at first-class "poetic" drama was that which culminated in the *Sophonisba* of Thomson. The history of this play reads like a solemn burlesque of what we see repeated at least once in every generation. The tone of the playhouses had sunk to triviality and non-

sense ; lovers of literature looked round to try to find somebody to redeem it ; and the young and brilliant poet of *The Seasons* was discovered. He was urged forward to do his best ; it was whispered that the result of his efforts was extraordinary. The very rehearsals of *Sophonisba* were "dignified" by audiences of the élite, "collected to anticipate the delight that was preparing for the public." Alas, when the event which was to mark the year 1730 forever in white on the façade of the Temple of Fame came off at length in a perfect furore of taste and expectancy, — "it was observed, that nobody was much affected, and that the company rose as from a moral lecture"! Thomson was an excellent poet, and there was nothing amiss with his sentiments or his versification, but he had no idea of "dramatic business." The disappointed public chanted, "Oh! *Jemmy Thomson*, *Jemmy Thomson* Oh!" and went about its affairs.

A quarter of a century later it was the turn of the Rev. John Home and his glorious and immortal tragedy of *Douglas*. Delirious eulogy paved the way for the performance of this piece, which reflected with no little cleverness the new romantic feeling that was daily forcing itself into popularity.

"The angry spirit of the water shriek'd," —

one realizes with what rapture, mingled with a fear that imagination was really going "too far," that would be received in 1756. So delicate a critic as Gray wrote that the author of *Douglas* "seems to me to have retrieved the true language of the stage, which had been lost for these hundred years." During the first performance at Edinburgh, a youthful and perfervid Scot leaped to his legs in the pit, flung up his bonnet, and shrieked, "Where's your Wully Shakespeare noo?" One hears the melancholy patter still: —

"My name is Norval ; on the Grampian hills
My father feeds his flocks."

It is like the sound of a hurdy-gurdy far away. Ah! "Where's your *Douglas* noo?" He had in all the body of his sentimentality no fibre of "dramatic business."

It would be tedious to pursue the relation of these failures. The manner of them is so uniform that one is amazed at its regularity, at the mechanical futility of successive generations of very clever men. Obviously the eighteenth-century patrons were searching for the wrong quality, and, oddly enough, we went on almost down the nineteenth century making the same mistake. We have seen that Addison and Thomson and "*Douglas*" Home were supposed to have done all that was necessary when they redeemed the diction of the theatre from mediocrity. It was taken for granted that all that was required of a poet was that he should "retrieve the true language of the stage." But what was not seen, in spite of failure upon failure, what was understood by Tennyson as little as it had been understood by Addison, was that before you can put on the embroidery of language you must have a sound theatrical business as a basis and a framework. The would be dramatic poets were willing to turn the stage into a platform or a pulpit or a concert-room ; the one thing they would not do was to treat it simply as a stage.

At the romantic revolution, one hundred years ago, the theatre had a great chance of reviving. In *The Fall of Robespierre* in 1794, Coleridge and Southey put forward, in dramatic form, a simple representation of a recent fact. In *The Borderers*, in 1795, Wordsworth attempted, with unusual boldness, to deal with an incident of fierce, illicit passion. But these efforts did not even reach the stage, and they continue to be mere curiosities of literature. It is a very odd fact, and one which has escaped general attention, that the romantic movement made an abortive attempt to work through the theatre before it found its true field

of action in lyrical poetry. If Wordsworth and Coleridge had happened to be brought into closer relations of friendship with some enterprising young manager in 1796, it is conceivable that our literature might have been reformed on purely theatrical lines, as German literature in the dramas of Schiller. But no encouragement was given them to appear before the footlights, and Coleridge's subsequent experiments on German bases, his *Wallenstein*, his *Zapolya*, even his moderately dramatic and not too poetic *Remorse* give us no certainty that a heaven-made playwright was crushed when nobody would act his tragedy of *Osorio*.

We pass over twenty years more in our swift survey, and we find, in 1815, the most popular poet of the day made a member of the Managing Committee of Drury Lane Theatre. This was Byron, through whose influence, indeed, Coleridge's *Remorse* had been produced some years earlier. It might have been expected that now, if ever, the poetic drama would have flourished in England. But the business side of Byron's character, his curious shrewdness and practical judgment, asserted themselves. He had accepted the responsibility as a matter of affairs, and by no means with the intention of being played tricks upon by the Muses. We therefore search his correspondence of this period in vain for any proposals that his solemn compeers should contribute high-flown poems to his theatre. He is found occupied, like a merchant, "in such complicated and extensive interests as the Drury Lane proprietary" may offer, and if he rather faintly suggests that Tom Moore should write an opera for him, what he really is eager about is some melodrama translated by Concanen from the French, or some flashy drama in which the charms of Fanny Kelly could be advertised.

In the very curious *Detached Thoughts* which Byron put down in 1821, and which were fully printed for the first

time in 1900, Byron makes some interesting remarks about his own conduct as a theatrical manager. He evidently feels that he ought to have done something to encourage the poetic drama, and, as people are apt to do in looking back, he thinks that he did a good deal. He had recourse, "in hope and in despair," to Sir Walter Scott; he "tried Coleridge, too;" he dallied with Maturin, and sank back upon Sir James Bland Burgess. On the whole, one realizes that he was foiled in faintly good intentions by his colleagues, that he was not greatly interested (at that time) in dramatic literature, that Drury Lane occupied his thoughts simply in connection with its opportunities of business and pleasure. Byron's experience as the manager of a great theatre was brief; it was washed away in the catastrophe of his domestic fortunes. When he began to write plays himself, he profited little by what experience he had enjoyed. After frenzied efforts to prevent his own old theatre of Drury Lane from acting *Marino Faliero* in 1821, Byron sullenly withdrew the injunction at the last, but the tragedy was coldly received. Of the rest of his dramas, not one was put on the boards until long after the poet's death, nor has one, in later representations, contrived to hold public attention. I record only a personal impression when I say that there is a blank verse tragedy of Byron's — the half-forgotten *Sardanapalus* — which I can imagine forming an agreeable spectacle in the hands of Mr. Beer-bohm Tree. It was played in 1834 by Macready, and in 1853 by Kean, with some positive credit and advantage; it may be looked upon as perhaps the least unsuccessful of nineteenth-century "poetic" plays.

The mention of Byron's tragedies seems to remind us that Shelley said to Leigh Hunt, "Certainly, if *Marino Faliero* is a drama, *The Cenci* is not." Since 1820, literary criticism has been engaged in reversing these clauses. It

would probably be admitted that *The Cenci* is not merely in the truest sense dramatic, but the most brilliant example of purely poetic drama written by an English poet in the nineteenth century. Yet no one sees it on the boards; no one has been found with courage enough to accept the complicated infamy of its personages. The character of Count Francesco Cenci is extremely theatrical; its elements are calculated in the highest degree to excite pity and terror on the stage; Shelley has imbued the scheme of the intrigues which surround it with an amount of dramatic business which is surprising in a poet with no practical knowledge of the requirements of the stage. It is the subject — the awful and revolting scheme — forever present in the beholder's mind, that appalling subject which cannot be ignored or put aside without sacrifice of significance to every scene and every speech, which excludes *The Cenci* from the theatre. We have here an instance of the peculiar conditions of dramatic art. We can read Shelley's tragedy, with all its wicked coil of passions, without more emotion than can be endured; but if it were set out before us on the public stage, visually and systematically, we should rise from our seats and fly the house in horror.

Even if the subject of *The Cenci* were one which the theatre could bear, there would be other objections to it. It is well contrived, but not well enough. An actress of great genius would doubtless make the speech of Beatrice to the guests, "I do entreat you, go not!" extremely effective, and her part, in general, has plenty of "business" in it. But it would need marvelous powers of elocution to prevent an audience from fretting at Orsino's unbroken soliloquy of sixty lines toward the end of the second act, at Giacomo's complicated descriptions, at Cenci's long-drawn ravings. And these are matters in the green tree of Shelley's extremely passionate, adroit, and

skillful drama, which is still full of intellectual life. What, then, is to be said of the dry? What of the scene of Maturin and Sheil, of Sheridan Knowles and Talfourd, of all that the beginning and middle of the nineteenth century took for poetic drama? What, indeed, — if not that, absolutely without exception, it was founded upon a wrong conception of art, theatrical and poetic alike?

The one significant fact in the earlier half of the century was the attitude of Macready to the theatre. He was the one manager of his age who genuinely preferred "poetic" drama, and desired to encourage and promote it. To his ardor, from 1825 to 1840, a certain revival of romantic plays was due. He commissioned various writers, Bulwer-Lytton and Browning among them, to compose tragedies for him in blank verse, and he continued with extraordinary pertinacity to produce the bourgeois versified plays, in imitation of Massinger, which were poured forth by the excellent Sheridan Knowles before he left the "loathed stage" and became a Baptist minister. We are quaintly told that Macready withdrew from the management, first of Covent Garden, then of Drury Lane, because he "found his designs for the elevation of the stage hampered and finally frustrated by the sordid aims of the proprietors and the absence of adequate public support." But it is odd that it did not occur to him that of course the public would not support what did not amuse it, and, equally of course, that the aims of the proprietors of the theatre must include a decent return on the money they expended. How a very clever actor and a sensible person like Macready could go on hopelessly producing objects of dreary diversion such as *Virginius* and *Ion*, and plays far more wooden than these, it passes the mind of man to conjecture.

Finally, about a quarter of a century ago, a fresh effort to revive poetic drama was made by Mr. (now Sir) Henry

Irving. Of this, also, it is not now possible to speak without some depression of spirits. One thing, indeed, must always be remembered greatly to Mr. Irving's credit. His famous revival of *Hamlet* in 1874 reintroduced Shakespeare to the London playgoer, and accustomed our ears to the finest language presented in a tragic manner, which was not always inadequate, and was frequently intelligent. But of encouragement to living literature much was said during this Lyceum period and remarkably little done. Mr. Irving was fascinated by the opportunities which romantic melodrama offered to the picturesque richness of the performances which he liked to give, and all the talk about poetry evaporated in such plays as those of W. G. Wills, whose unliterary and almost illiterate Charles I. and *Faust* (the latter a really shameful travesty of a masterpiece) did much to lower the level of popular taste. Meanwhile, Mr. Irving had some communication with Browning, but the poet would write nothing new, while the actor-manager refused to perform *The Return of the Druses*, — as, indeed, he well might. Encouragement of poetic drama confined itself to the performance of one or two plays by Tennyson, of which *Becket* was the least insignificant. But Irving grew less and less inclined, as years went on, to adventure upon a new play of any description.

It was necessary to recount, thus rapidly, the experience of the last two centuries, to show how incessantly the desire for poetic drama has reasserted itself, and how completely it has been rejected by successive generations of theatre-goers. On the eve of considering what is at least a very curious and interesting recrudescence of this effort, it is worth while looking back again to the eighteenth century and asking ourselves what has led to this constant failure. Why is it that all the talent of Betterton and Garrick and Kean and Macready, aided by all the talent of Addison and

Thomson and Byron and Browning, has been able to make precisely nothing at all of poetic drama in England? If we can only discover the reason, the cankerworm at the root of this, we may possibly be able to deal more intelligently with the future. If we cannot discover it, the present hopeful gleam of revival will sink and be quenched like all its predecessors. My belief is that it is possible to suggest the principal, the most ubiquitous and most fatal danger, but to indicate it, it is necessary for me to wear the white sheet of penitence for an error of judgment in the past.

Mr. William Archer, certainly the most competent of our living theatrical critics, suggested several years ago that the customary mode of approaching such a poem as Webster's *Duchess of Malfy* was not correct as regards the stage. It required some courage to suggest that the tragedy on which every critic, from Charles Lamb and Mr. Swinburne downwards, had lavished eulogy for its power to move the emotions and its intense dramatic effect was really, for stage purposes, a very bad play, and its "dreadful apparatus," as Elia calls it, the silly terror of a boggy-man. I forget in what connection Mr. Archer advanced these censures; I read them, much incensed, since our holiest poetic shibboleth, the Elizabethan Tradition, seemed to be questioned and undermined. Successive generations of analysts have dwelt more and more occultly on the splendor of the crowd of tragic poets who wrote from the times of Kyd and Marlowe to the times of Ford and Shirley. Not only has the imagination, the literary passion, of these playwrights been considered something above all censure, but it has come to be a matter of faith that their stagecraft was equally faultless. In short, the universal opinion of the higher criticism has been that nothing but the vulgarity and ignorance of modern audiences prevented Middleton and Tourneur and the rest from being entirely enjoy-

able on the boards to-day. With this went the corollary that to produce a tragedy worthy to be acted, you must write as much as possible in the mode of Tourneur and Middleton.¹

Whether Mr. Archer, whose dealings are mainly with the living drama, has pushed his audacities further than to question the value of the horror scenes in *The Duchess of Malfy*, I do not know. His remark, however, sunk deep into my own breast, and (I have to confess) has wrought a revolution there. I have been reading the old "impressive scenes" of the seventeenth-century dramatists over again from the stage point of view, and while I admire their poetry no less than ever, I am bound to say that I can no longer hold the faith of our fathers as to their stage quality. In reading these plays, and rediscovering them, a hundred years ago, Charles Lamb found in them "an exquisiteness of moral sensibility, making one to gush out tears of delight," and we may still find it there. But these are closet beauties, and we may be sure that half of them would be imperceptible on the stage, and half of the rest repulsive.

The great reason, then, in my humble and converted opinion, why poetic drama since the seventeenth century has inevitably failed in England, is that it has remained faithful to the Elizabethan Tradition. This has been followed by every writer of a play in verse. It haunts us, it oppresses us, it destroys us. On the merits of the seventeenth-century drama, it is no longer needful to insist. The silver trumpets of Mr. Swinburne's praise are ever in our ears; he ceases not from celebrating "the dawn-enkindled quire" of starry playwrights. But, on the other hand, why is it forbidden to point out how violent and excessive they are, how wearisome in their iterations, how confused, wordy, and incoherent? These are faults which the reader of a dramatic poem easily skips over and forgets; but these are what ruin a play upon the

stage. These violences and verbosities, this lack of thought for narrative evolution, this absence of consideration for the eye and ear of the audience, have come to be accepted as essential characteristics of poetic drama. This is the unshaken Elizabethan faith, and it is this that has wrecked play after play on the English stage. If poetry, in the future, is to speak from the footlights, it must avoid the Elizabethan Tradition as it would the plague.

The great hope of the newest revival of poetic drama in England lies, to my mind, in the fact that it is more independent of the Elizabethan Tradition than any previous movement of the kind has been. Neither Mr. Yeats in his Irish folk-plays, nor Mr. Stephen Phillips in his three remarkably successful experiments, has permitted himself to be bound down by the mannerisms which so grievously handicapped, to speak of no others, such illustrious predecessors of theirs as Tennyson, Browning, and Mr. Swinburne. Mr. Yeats, in common with M. Maeterlinck and certain other Continental playwrights of the latest school, obtains new effects by plunging deeper than the dramatist has hitherto been expected to plunge into the agitations and exigencies of the soul. He uses the symbol to awaken the mystical sense; he works before our eyes the psychological phenomena of mystery, and excites our curiosity with regard to those "invisible principles" on which the author of *La Princesse Maleine* delights to insist. In this species of drama, with its incessant suggestion of the unseen, the unknown, there is something child-like. It takes us back to the infancy of feeling, to the May-time of the world. It does not pretend and would not desire to obtain gross successes in the popular theatres of large world centres.

The dramatic poetry of Mr. Stephen Phillips, on the other hand, does make that pretension, and it is difficult not to believe that the performances of Herod

in 1901 and of *Ulysses* and *Paolo and Francesca* in 1902 will take an interesting place in the history of theatrical literature. For it is important to notice that Mr. Phillips does not separate himself, as M. Maeterlinck and Mr. Yeats do, from the common observations of mankind. In his plays we discover no effort to deal with any but the superficial aspects of life and passion. He confines himself, in a remarkable degree, to the obvious characteristics of emotion. It is these, indeed, which most appeal to the modern playgoer, and when Mr. Phillips succeeds in pleasing alike the seeker after delicate literary sensations and the average sensual person in the stalls, he achieves a remarkable triumph of tact. That he does it without recourse to the Elizabethan Tradition is another proof of his adroitness. His theatrical pretensions are the more easy to deal with because in all other respects he is in no sense an inaugurator. Like M. Rostand in France — whose career has in some ways curiously resembled his — Mr. Phillips is so little of an innovator in his essential dramatic æsthetics, that the extreme school deny to him the merit of being a dramatic poet at all, his genius — except in its tact and adroitness — being entirely conservative and reproductive.

The literary success of Mr. Stephen Phillips is bound up in a remarkable degree with practical knowledge of stage requirements. The poet is himself an actor, — he played with applause the dignified and pleasing rôle of the Ghost in *Hamlet*, — and he has all that acquaintance with the necessities and impossibilities of stage movement which greater poets than he have utterly failed for the want of. He has also, it would seem, placed himself more unreservedly than the writers of the old tradition were willing to do in the hands of the actor-manager. In particular, to refuse to acknowledge the part of Mr. Beerbohm Tree in this revival of poetic drama

would be to commit an act of flagrant injustice. Mr. Tree believed in the possibility of bringing poetry out across the footlights when the chasm between verse and the people seemed to be at its widest. His productions of Shakespeare, tintured as they all have been with something too flamboyant and redundant for an austere taste, curiously indicative — as we look back upon them — of the brocaded and embroidered side of his own genius as a manager, brought him into close relations with romantic verse, and with the treatment of what we call “purple passages.” He felt, as we cannot but surmise, that the total disregard of purity of enunciation, which was the malady of the Lyceum school of acting twenty years ago, must be fatal to poetry, since, whatever the splendor of ornament and whatever the subtlety of acting, if the language of the piece is inaudible the purpose of the poet must be frustrated. Mr. Tree deserves no little commendation for the clearness and dignity of utterance upon which he insists.

In working out this cardinal reform, — the clear and correct pronunciation of English, — Mr. Beerbohm Tree, and indeed the whole London stage, owes much to the Oxford company of beginners trained so patiently and unobtrusively by Mr. F. R. Benson. This troupe, in fact, supplies the English stage to-day with its most cultivated and, we may say, its most academic actors. From this school, by the way, Mr. Phillips himself proceeded. The company with which Mr. Alexander plays *Paolo and Francesca* is recruited from the same source, and it is charming to see with what gravity, with what reverence for the text, they pronounce Mr. Phillips’s romantic blank verse, as if their object were to give as much of its beauty as possible, and not as little, which was the earlier traditional plan. Our actors and managers, in fact, have at last accepted poetic drama as a possible treasure to boast of, not

as a thing to be apologized for and to be hidden as much as possible out of sight.

Mr. Stephen Phillips, then, would seem to have succeeded in producing one of those revivals of poetic drama which occur in our history three or four times in every century. Whether he will do more than this, whether he will inaugurate a new epoch of dramatic literature remains to be experienced. We have seen that the difficulty is not so much to get a poem acted, amid the plaudits of a clique, as to persuade the general public to like it and to continue to support it. At present, our advices are that the London audiences liked Herod better than could be expected, and are liking Paolo and Francesca better still. In the long run it is not by silly personal friends of the author "claiming his kinship with Sophocles and with Dante" that a new writer for the stage is supported. The poetic inventor who writes for the stage has to learn that he cannot trust to the flattery of his associates. For him the severest tests alone are prepared; he must descend, like Ulysses,

"to gather tidings of his land
There, in the dark world, and win back his way."

Mr. Stephen Phillips has been the victim of more injudicious praise than is often poured out upon young writers

even in this crude and impetuous age. But he has shown qualities of power and reserve which give us hope that he will survive the honeyed poison of his friends. He possesses a high sense of beauty, and great skill in preserving this under the vulgar glare of the theatre. He can tell a story theatrically so as to excite curiosity, and lead it steadily forward to the close. He is fond of those familiar types which are consecrated to romantic ideas in the minds of all cultivated people, and which relieve them of the strain of following an unknown fable. He realizes that modern audiences will not *think* after dinner, and he is most adroit in presenting to them romantic images, rich costumes, and vivid emotions, without offering to their intellects the smallest strain. He does not attempt, like his predecessors, to dictate to the actors impossible and unscenic tasks, but bends his ambition to the habits and requirements of a practicable modern stage. In short, he seems to represent the essence of common sense applied to the difficult task of reviving poetic drama upon the boards where it flourished until two hundred and fifty years ago, and where it has never flourished since. We need not talk rubbish about Sophocles, but we ought, surely, to offer every reasonable welcome to an experiment so graceful, so civilizing, and so intelligent.

Edmund Gosse.

THE DESERT.

OPINIONS are frequently so hastily formed, and conclusions are so often erroneous, that they need not be taken too seriously into account. One may believe that the earth is borne upon the back of a turtle, or that God will punish his creatures for performing the acts that he caused them to perform; yet these beliefs will not alter the real

truth of the matter. Truth is not lying at the bottom of a well, but is all about the world, on the sea, in counting houses, in workshops, and in temples. That it is often not recognized makes no difference with the fact that its presence is universal. Yet even truth may seem to be a variable thing, in accordance with conditions. To a

monk, withdrawal from the world and the practice in the sternest way of abstinence and continence may represent the requirements of truth, but that seeming of truth to him does not make it truth to others. So it is with people, and landscapes, and places. The fact that a given man can see no beauty away from Piccadilly or the Bois de Boulogne does not disprove the beauty of the Lake of Bourget or the Valley of Apam. Because deserts, to most people, are places of desolation that they like to shut out of their sight if they can, and out of their memories when they have once passed over them and are safely in the green valleys or the fertile flat lands, it is none the less true that they are among the most interesting places upon the face of the earth. Deserts are equal to the sea in the ideas they give of extent, solitude, and infinity, and equal to the mountains in beauty and weirdness. One of their chiefest beauties is that they are far from the throngs and crowds of tired, nervous, disappointed, and envious men and women, who occupy much of the nearer landscape in inhabited places.

In the uninhabited desert there are no men bending under weights of underpaid labor, no women eating out their hearts because of unsatisfied cravings and ambitions; there are no richer and no poorer ones there; no vexing questions of schism and sect, or ruled and rulers, of capital and labor, of natural desires and artificial morals. But there is a brooding peace, as deep as the fountains of life in the bosom of old mother earth; there is silent communion with the powers and laws of nature, with the Power or Force or God that somewhere back of its visible and invisible mysteries looks so carefully after the things that exist that even the sparrows are accounted for; and there is a content that is beyond money and power and position and the accidents of birth, station, and environment. Like old Omar's

"Strip of herbage strown,"

the deserts surely are the places

"Where name of slave and sultan is forgot,"—

and well forgot. They are the places where Truth wears no disguises, and whose face may be studied even by a fool.

The deserts too have physical beauty. This varies with each one as much as do the individual beauties and peculiar attractions of different ranges of mountains. With some there are the shifting seas of gray sands, ever moving, ever rearing themselves into hills and dunes that are blown down again by the next wind—blown down and dispersed and scattered as men have ever been dispersed and scattered, no matter how strongly they allied themselves into tribes and communities and nations. Nor are the dunes much sooner forgotten than are the men and the races, if the measurement is computed by geological time. In such hot, gray deserts there is a strange weirdness, almost beauty, in the metallic sky, in the occasional sagebush or cactus, in the great ball of molten fire that is the sun. But the chiefest charm in such deserts, as with all, is in the fact that here one can be alone, with himself and with nature, and away from all the mistakes and cares that burden life in the inhabited places. When the Juggernaut car of Civilization presses unduly and unusually hard, when things are most out of joint, when the disease of progress is at such an acute and critical stage that a powerful counter-irritant is needed, then the beauties of the hottest and most barren desert are unfolded, and are appreciated, as is strong drink after exposure to severe cold. But for lasting beauty and permanent enjoyment, the deserts where some vegetation grows, where a dry stream-bed winds its way across the landscape, where prairie dogs and locusts abound and ant-hills mark the course of vision, are the most desired. In some such deserts there are a few winding, irresolute little rivers

that seem to have been frightened by tales of the uproar and fury of the sea, and to have turned inland to places where they can drop out of sight and bury themselves in the sands in peace. I know such a desert, where cottonwood trees grow along the courses of the odd little rivers, inviting the dusty traveler to lie under their welcome shade and prove the wisdom of the nations that number the siesta among their national institutions. And if there is a gray, hazy mist in the sky or in part of it, and given that the sun is willing, there is spread before one the marvelous mirages of the Southland. In such a place, I once saw a mirage of an island in a quiet sea. The beach descended in an easy slope to the water line, irregular rows of palm trees grew along the shore, and an infinite silence and peace hovered like a benison over the place. I do not know where the reality of the image is located, but some place on the face of this one of God's worlds that island of beauty exists, perhaps in undiscovered pristinity, and is another of the visible manifestations of the absolute beauty, and consequently of the absolute good, of nature. A few of us saw this transferred picture when we were in a barren desert of the great Bolson of Mapimi, and its only settings were the sky, the sun, and the broad, silent stretches of sand. I think no one of that little party had ever seen anything more beautiful among all the lands and cities he knew; and I think no one of them will ever be told so much of the real grace and goodness of nature or of God as was there disclosed as a picture in the silence of the desert.

The deserts have voices, and we can hear and understand them if the ears of our souls are open and attuned to the languages they speak. They do not speak loudly, and with insistence, but very gently, and with great modesty; and they speak with the sublime indifference that is one of the chief appurtenances of all truth. We may listen

or close our ears, we may understand or not, we may heed or go unheeding, it is all matter of the most complete indifference to the desert. It is with the voice of nature that the desert speaks, with the truth of nature, with the persistence of nature; but if we heed not its voice, or are indifferent to its message, the great soul of the desert stops not to argue nor to grieve, for it knows that to-morrow we shall be dead and at one with nature anyhow. Whether we hear or are deaf, God's will will be done; nations will rise and fall, mountains will emerge from the sea, and the sea will submerge mountains; fables of Jehennum and the devil will be hurled broadcast to frighten men during their few days, and men will in time return to the dust from which they are made, and the future will remain in the hands of God, who perhaps has not told even to the spirits of the desert the secret of the purpose of things. The inevitable and infallible evolution of things will go on, the processes of the suns will work out the destinies that were set to them, and why should the soul of the desert trouble itself because weak mortals cannot understand its language, and that they prefer to keep their eyes to the ground and suffer deafness of their own choosing, rather than strive to see the beauties it speaks of, and understand the messages it is willing to say into their unwilling ears?

I know a desert that is full of voices, that is full of messages written in stone that men can but dimly understand, that is full of sermons of a rarer and better kind than men have ever spoken. This desert is on a high plateau, a thousand feet above the desertlike valley of a lonely river that winds its way along nature's course to the sea, unmindful of what bands of temporary peoples may from time to time inhabit and encumber its banks. This desert was once inhabited, and through its crumbling ruins it tells of nations that were born into the world, perhaps be-

fore the word history had a definition, and who faded from life perhaps before the Druids were sacrificing blood in the groves of Britain, and who were followed by other nations in a younger time that is now so old as to be almost beyond comprehension. These old cliff ruins, slowly wearing away by the gentle action of the soft winds that blow down from the mountains, speak eloquently of the inevitable destiny of men and the races of men. We may find, if we seek the knowledge, that distant descendants of the ancient nations who once dwelt and toiled and loved and worshiped and died, in what is now this gray desert, live petty lives in mud villages in remote places; but the time has been so long, and food has had to be sought so persistently, that they know of the old tribes of their ancestors only by dim traditions and the scraps of history handed down and woven into the fantastic superstitions of their priests. The soul of this desert, speaking from among the crumbling ruins that dot it as any hills dot a sandy valley, seems to say, "In the end all the works of men lead but to oblivion and decay. Individuals, communities, tribes, and nations may fret the face of the earth for a little time with their presence, with their toilings, and their wranglings over things that they know not of, but in the end it will be in all places as it is here. The peoples will be gone, and those who come after them will know not where. Memories of them will not abide with their successors, and they will be forgotten utterly in all places in the world. But the effects of what they have done will not be lost, for nothing is lost in nature."

The realizing sense that we get in this desert of our own smallness and futility is better than much of the education that is dinned into the ears of students by pale-faced, dogmatic pedants. And, when we come to think upon the truths that the desert teaches, we find them pleasant. We are yet at

the beginning of things, although we may be the descendants and ascendants of every form of vegetable and animal life that has ever been upon the earth or in its waters. For us, with our little brains that are so easily turned, it is perhaps better that we are incapable of understanding the skies and the stars, the beginning and the end of things, and the great facts about God and his myriads of worlds. Else might the knowledge craze us; and as it would be impossible for our wisdom to keep even pace, even if we could comprehend the knowledge, our happiness is better conserved, and our progress better assured, that things are as they are.

In the desert the condition of the surroundings makes it plain to us, as the forests made the same truths plain to Thoreau, that we are insignificant and ignorant; that we do not know the letter "A" and cannot count one. But a great fact, temporarily at least, is made known to our intuitive senses, a fact that all the science and theology of all the races of men have not yet been able to conclusively and absolutely prove, namely, that with us, and as part of us, are souls, mysterious parts of the fabrics of our being that we do not comprehend, and that are immortal if it is wisest and best for them to be so. The desert takes away from her true lovers the fear of death and the mysteries of the unknown and unknowable future. She teaches that it is wisest and best that she herself exists, that the mountains exist, that humanity exists, that the universe exists, that water seeks always its level, that the clouds pass over the face of the earth, that all that is right, and that it must also be true that it is best for all life that exists in flesh to have an end. The silent voices of the desert say that in all nature there are no mistakes; that, therefore, it is impossible for mankind to be a mistake, and that if immortality is best, then it will surely be.

There are poisonous things in the des-

erts, plants whose juices are death-dealing, and creatures that are venomous, but they have their places and their uses in the great system of things; and this is none the less true because we, who do not know even our own uses and purposes, fail to know theirs. It must also be inevitably true that their uses and purposes are for ultimate and absolute good, as are all things else in the world.

I know a desertlike place that is not wholly a desert, yet it is neither oasis nor fertile land. It is what might be termed a semi-desert, and it has a mood that is different from that of other deserts. It seems a philosophic, well-contented sort of place, that has much knowledge, much wisdom, and that extracts a wise enjoyment from the days that pass over it. It is nearly related to a tall peak, and is akin to a near-by range of mountains, and to the air and the sky. Flowers grow upon this semi-desert, — sunflowers, and bergamot, and bluebells, and Mariposa lilies, and many other shaggy little stems that bear blue and yellow and white and seven-hued blossoms. It knows sagebrush, too, and yucca, and various pygmy cacti. It is field and farm and native land for many well-established, ancient, and wise nations of prairie dogs, and it is the world and the fullness thereof for thousands of republics of ants. This semi-desert stretches away from the mountains and runs undulating in billows toward the east. We know it reaches to farms and towns and work and trouble, and that its next of kin, the prairie, goes on to the great rivers whose banks are lined with the coveters of chattels, but we like to think that, as a desert, it stretches away beyond the horizon, and passes unchanged on to infinity, and that across it is the road to eternity, and endless growth of soul, and ceaseless joy of effort and consummation.

A little town has been built upon the edge of this desert. The town is the best one I know, and is infinitely superior to London or Paris or New York,

in that it is infinitely smaller, and therefore cannot hold so much poverty and vice and false pride and malice and envy; but yet it seems a sort of desecration for it to sit in all its upstart garishness upon the edge of this ancient and perfect semi-desert. It seems an impertinence, something as a beetle would if it sat upon a masterpiece of the painter's art. The desert crowds upon the town somewhat, by way of discipline, and it sometimes seems mildly to threaten that it will press forward and sweep the houses and gardens before it. But I think it is not much annoyed by the town, or that it gives much thought to it, for other towns, in other and forgotten times, may have settled upon its borders, and they are gone, and the desert knows by that past experience, as well as by its natural wisdom, that this town too will go in time, and that it will be left again to undisturbed communion with the stars that are its angels, and the mountains that are its sisters, and with the sun that is lover of both it and the mountains. And then, too, if the town has the same good right to exist that the desert has, the desert knows that much better than does the town. The mountains that look down upon this semi-desert wrap themselves in mantles of filmy mist at night, and they and the desert sleep the peaceful sleep of nature, secure in the absolute knowledge that the sun will come again as soon as it is best for him to come. Then in the morning the mists unwrap themselves in winding veils of beauty and melt away; the sun kisses the desert and thrills the mountains to their hearts with messages of infinity and eternity. Yet perhaps the desert and the mountains say to one another that the little town is not a desecration, but is also good, and that even its poorest and meanest inhabitant is as great and as valuable in the estimation of God as is the sun himself.

The most beautiful, the most mysterious, the most inscrutable of all the

deserts I know is one that lies to the north of the city of Zacatecas. It is much loved by the sun, but it loves the shadow better. The sun gathers pictures over the world for it and casts them as mirages upon it for it to see, much as any other foolish lover casts pieces of stone and bits of metal at the feet of his sweetheart. But this desert loves the sun better because of his disappearance; and when he sinks behind the Sierra Madres, which are the true lovers and beloved of this desert, she puts on her loveliest appearance, and takes unto herself a beauty that is beyond description. The hills outvie her in effort and in beauty, and if in all the world there is a more lovely or more beautiful place than is this at sunset, then have travelers missed the purpose of their wanderings, for they have not told of such a place. The sun casts golden messages back as he sinks over the side of the world, — shafts of light that strike the sides of the everlasting hills and refract from them in prisms of greater beauty than ever artist fastened to canvas. The mountains translate these golden messages into shadows, and send them stealing over the bosom of the desert. The everlasting hills change their color from the dull brown of day into an ultramarine, and the golden aureole on their summits makes them seem to be truly clothed in royal purple and golden crowns, but better than human imitations, for theirs are purple of royal nature and crowns of nature's beauty. The subtropical atmosphere that has been surcharged with heat throughout the day quivers in vibrations that seem to extend to the ends of space, and the mountains appear to quiver, and even to move forward in perfect motion and in dancing light, in sympathy with the kind and perfect farewell of the sun. These everlasting mountains seem to call out a message to the desert, and to the humans and beetles and ants, too, if they can understand, and say, —

"We are the everlasting hills. We are the beloved of the sun, who thrills us to our hearts each day, and tells us of the infinity and immutability and all-wisdom of our Creator. We stand as emblems of eternity and steadfastness and truth and right-being. We are motionless, but we are content, for we know that in God's good time we will be changed. But we are immortal, and indestructible, and created of God, and nothing can be other than well with us. And the sun loves us, and love is the warmth and the light of existence, and we are content, and more than content."

And as the golden crowns fade from the summits of the mystic mountains, and the shadows stretch in longer lines of beauty over the face of the perfect earth, the desert gives voice, and answers, —

"I am the desert, the eternal desert, also beloved of the sun. I have been since the beginning of God's earth, and I shall be until the end of his earth shall come. The sun that kisses me, and impregnates me with warmth and heat, has taught me that in some form and in some place I shall always be, and so I am content, and all is well with me. I stand for quiet and for peace, and I am the visible emblem of quietness and of peace in the world. My limits, that lie beyond the scope of vision, are to teach men of the boundless extent of right and truth; my peace is to teach them that all is good, and that to all will come peace. I that am finite stand as a visible emblem of infinity. I that am mortal am an irrefutable proof of immortality. And because I am great and silent and mysterious, I speak unerringly to the depth and greatness and silence and mystery of the souls of humans, that, like me, were made by nature and by nature's God."

The desert sometimes has a sterner message. If one appears before her in pride and arrogance, she will say, —

"Oh, poverty-stricken human; you are among the least of all things in the sight of God, for he has given you less than the gifts that are to his other creatures. Your days are less than the days of the stone, your joys are less than the joys of the lark, your understanding is less than my own, and all that was vouchsafed you was an uncertain few of nights and days. Yet have you manacled these few nights with terror, and hindered your days with loads of folly and vain desire. Seek not so much after riches, for your flesh melts, and soon you sink back into the elements of nature. Embitter not your souls with envy, for you and those whom your envy causes you to hate are but as the beetles and the grass and the leaves, — inheritors only of inevitable death. Be not selfish, for your weak self is but as a mote in a ray of light. God will not stop the blowing of one of the least of his winds in order that you may triumph over your neighbor, or that your selfish vanity may be gratified. And all the largesse you pay to

self-appointed agents of the Immutable Right will not add a single day to your days, nor will it relieve you from paying a full right for the least of your wrongs."

But the desert has the same spirit as its mother earth, who speaks messages of hope and peace to all her creatures. And when we seek wisdom from the desert, and listen to it in reverence, it says, —

"Come to me, for I am solitude, and in solitude is wisdom. Come to me, for I am silence, and in silence is communion with God. Come to me, for I am beauty, and beauty is a thing beyond the creation of Cæsar or of Midas. But come not to me at all unless you come in humility and right thinking, for in exacting those things I am as one with God, and with me a king is no greater than a beggar. But if you will know me, and study me, and love me, I will give you peace, and a great content, and a knowledge that is beyond what you may gain from men, or from events, or from books."

Verner Z. Reed.

OUR LADY OF THE BEECHES.

PROLOGUE OF LETTERS.

LETTER XXII.

June 4, AMONG THE BEECHES.

I AM glad you did not tell me who you are, as I do not wish to know. But I understand your letter only too well. You are lonely, poor man of science! you long for a friend, and because you do not know me, you fancy I might be that friend. You are in that state of mind — or is n't it in reality a state of heart? — when a man longs for a woman, a woman for a man friend.

I too have struggled with the feeling that it is foolish to keep you at such a distance, that we would each of us

be happier for knowing the other, but I am conscious all the time that the feeling is a weakness. I like you, I like your letters; the eyes of the pastel in the tower-room have grown to be your eyes, and I like and trust them. But if I know who you are, would not half the charm be gone?

Have you never, before going to some strange place, made for yourself a picture of that place, and then, arriving, been almost ludicrously disappointed because the house was on the wrong side of the road, or the door not where you had built it in your imagination? The

me you have invented is the friend you want and need. The *me* I am is a different woman, the result of a host of things in which you have had no hand. And I confess that the you I have invented is all that I want, and I should be disappointed in a thousand ways if we should ever meet.

No, let us leave things as they are, dear Pessimist. I have been having a bad time of late: outside things have gone wrong; but what is worse, I am upset and jarred mentally. Even my trees cannot soothe me into my usual calm.

These lovely May days nearly break my heart, for some reason; the birds' singing brings tears to my silly eyes; I feel the terror of growing old. Time is going, — "the bird of Time is on the wing," — and I am doing nothing. I am doing no one any good, myself least of all. I am not even enjoying life. But this is what you call "drivel," — forgive it, and set it down to a touch of spring fever!

Thanks for the book, which I am glad to have, though I have not yet even opened it.

Old Annette expects her husband in July. She is much excited, in a quaint, shy way, and leaves me in a few days to go back to Paris. Here she comes with a frightful concoction of herbs for me to drink. She is very wise, and she thinks the spring air has got into my blood.

Perhaps it has!

Good - by, kindest of Pessimists. Write me soon, and tell me I am a goose.

W.

LETTER XXIII.

June 15, BAR HARBOR.

DEAR W. — Poor child, poor child! so you have it, too. Spring fever is what the old wives in Yankeeland call it, did you know? In children it may come from the liver. In grown people it comes from the memory. The memory of happy days is bad enough, but

far worse is the memory of the happy days one never had.

But you are too young to know this. You should not know it, — should not, and yet you do; and I have a feeling that your pain comes, as does mine, from the memory of those happy days never had. Old Annette gave you all the mothering you ever knew. My grandmother gave me mine, and to this day I envy children with a silly, illogical, loving little mother who spoils them and cuddles them in her soft arms. Do you? Have you children of your own?

You are right, we must not meet; but we must be friends, we must trust each other. Do not be afraid of me; I swear that if by moving my hand I could know all about you, I would not do it without your permission. There is not one person in the world who would not gasp with astonishment could he see this letter, but I mean it all. I *am* lonely. I do sometimes long, with a keenness that hurts, for a sympathetic woman friend with whom to talk, "the heart in the hand," as Italians say; and yet I am not in the least a sentimental, or even a woman's man. Once, years ago, when I was still in college, I fell in love with a pretty girl, and asked her to marry me. She refused, in the kindest way in the world, because I had no money, and she only a little; beyond this I have had no romances. Isn't it rather pitiful, the baldness of such a life? I could wish sometimes that I were the victim of a great tragedy. It would be something to remember, something for which to deserve the self-pity that wells up to my very eyes sometimes.

Are you laughing at me? Is Our Lady of the Beeches in one of her mocking moods? If so, so be it. We are friends, and surely friends can bear a bit of chaff.

If you have not yet read the book, do not, I beg you. It is sincerely and honestly written, but it is the work of a materialist, and, I now see, no read-

ing for a young woman of your character.

Why I was sent into the world with this taste and talent for iconoclastics, that which made me must know. I am counted a wise man, I have a string of letters after my name, I have made two discoveries considered important; but, after all, what good has it done me?

And such reading as you could do on my lines, dear lady, at best superficial and imperfectly understood, can do you only harm. May I know whether you believe in a God? If you do, as I hope, read nothing to shake that belief.

The Pessimist as a preacher!

I have been in this delightful place for ten days, and shall stay all summer, boating, riding, and loafing.

The air, a rare combination of sea and mountain, is delicious, the colors equal to those of Italy, and the house where I am stopping almost a bachelor's hall, though my friend is married. His wife plays golf all day, and when the season is in full swing will dance all night, so we here are subject to but little control.

I went to a dinner last night, at which the conversation turned, strangely enough, on American women who have married foreigners. Nearly every one present knew of some such case, while of course several were well known to us all. I wondered whether any of the talkers knew *Our Lady of the Beeches*.

My silence drawing attention to me, one man asked, laughing:—

"And you, S——, don't you know any such fair deserter?"

Almost involuntarily I answered, "Yes, the most charming woman I ever knew married in Europe." And then the charming women present besieged me with questions, which I did not answer.

I noticed, among all the examples of international marriages cited, that not one was said to be conspicuously happy.

I wonder why women will not learn that to cut themselves off from all early associations, after the age for making new close friends, is a dangerous thing. Women need friends, acquaintances will not do; and a girl brought up in one country can never — love her husband as she may — learn to be of another country.

But I am lecturing. Forgive me, you who know from experience whether I am right or wrong.

Write me soon again. Send your letter to Box 71, Bar Harbor, Maine. Faithfully your friend,

C. R. S.

LETTER XXIV.

June 27, LONDON.

Yesterday I had a tremendous shock. A man whom I have known for years, and liked, a friend of my husband, I had thought a friend of mine, asked me to go away with him.

I have never flirted with him, I knew that he was more or less in love with me, but I had thought that he was a gentleman. He has been mixed up in my life a great deal of late, and once or twice has shown me a kind of tacit sympathy that I could not refuse. That is all. Yesterday he dared, in perfectly cold blood, to propose to me to leave my husband for him.

He began by telling me I had a great deal of self-control, and you will see how innocent I was when I tell you I did not know what he meant. Then he asked me point-blank whether I had not known that he loved me.

I answered honestly that I had known it, and that I was very grateful to him for never letting his feelings become an obstacle to our pleasant friendship.

He informed me thereupon that when a man loves a woman he never is mistaken about her feeling for him, that he knew I loved him, and that the time had come when neither of us could stand the strain of present circumstances any longer.

His strength of conviction was such that I was utterly aghast for a minute, and then, the funny side of it suddenly appearing to me, I burst into what he called "a roar" of laughter. It was all so absurd.

When at last he stopped talking I told him very gently that he was utterly wrong, that I was not in the least in love with him, and that I must beg of him not to force me to see him again until he had come to his senses. He left me without a word, and I have been growing angrier ever since.

There must be a strain of vulgarity in me, for I should like at this moment nothing better than to box his ears. The worst of it is, Pessimist, that I am sure the wretch is somewhere cursing my *self-control*.

The belief that I care for him appears to be too deep-rooted to be jerked out so suddenly, and it seems that several of my innocent words and acts have been construed into a tacit acceptance of his passion. He called it his *passion*!

My unfortunate burst of laughter he no doubt took on consideration as the result of hysterical joy, and here I am, angry as I have been but a few times in my life, and — perfectly helpless. How can I make the creature believe that I never gave him a thought of that kind — that I looked on him as a good sort, not too clever, and rather attractively faithful to his mute adoration of my charming self! However —

So you are at dear old Bar Harbor! Why spell it with a "u"? Anything so essentially, deliciously American surely ought to be writ in the American way. I have been there, and love it.

When I was very young I was in love there, and that was enchanting.

The object of my love was a handsome youth with blue eyes, and, oh rapture! a budding mustache. He had a great deal of money, and his attentions, although I was in reality too young to be the recipient of such things,

were not discouraged by my only relative, a cousin, and for a time all went well, and we were engaged, subject to certain restrictions.

The following winter I had the measles and was taken South to recuperate. My young body, alas, recuperated no sooner than did my young heart, and poor Annette's was the task of seeing him when he came to see me in the early spring. Vanity notwithstanding, I am compelled to admit that he was not crushed by the blow, and a few years ago I met him at Venice with his wife, a very pretty girl with a curl in the middle of her forehead.

Does one still go to Duck Brook and Bubble Pond? Dear Bar Harbor, how blue the air is there, and how strong the salt smell!

No, I have no children; and will you think me very awful for being glad I have not?

Your moralizing on international marriages amuses me. How do you know, dear Pessimist, for you do know a great deal. You are not entirely right, however. Now the reason, I think, that such marriages are apt to be unhappy is that they are nine times out of ten merely marriages de convenance. A very rich girl marries a more or less needy nobleman (and say what one will, European men as a whole greatly prefer marrying women of their own race); she lives with him the life he is used to and likes, and takes up his interests. If they are in love with each other in such a way that it lasts, of course all is well; but usually at least one of them tires, and then no old associations, no common relations and friends binding them together, the woman, do what she will, *compares* the two countries, and grows homesick. It is a dangerous experiment, as you say, though there are some exceptions.

The happiest people I know in the world are an American girl and her Dutch husband. The girl was not rich, the man had not only little money, but

also no particular social position, and yet they are perfectly happy; the necessary bond in this case being a passion for tulips. The girl was always crazy about flowers, and the man is one of the most successful amateur "tulipists" in Holland. He directed her love for flowers in general to tulips in particular, and there they live among acres of garden, like an unmolested Adam and Eve.

So you have never married. I thought you had not, even before the letter after your illness. I have been married for some years. My husband is very good to me; I can't imagine a better husband, in many ways.

I tell you this that you may imagine me no Griselda, after my occasional wails. The unhappiness I have, amigo, comes from within. Do not pity me too much.

To-day, or rather this evening, I am savage with the whole world, most of all with myself for paying so little heed to the moods and thoughts of what I considered a harmless little man. I should like to fly off to a wilderness and revert to a savage life. I wish my only thought was to have enough to eat. I wish I had a nice comforting vice, such as smoking, or bridge. Nothing keeps a woman out of mischief so well as a pet vice.

I have not read the book, but I think you had better let me. The God I believe in is the God of no creed, and of infinite mercy. I do not fear Him. Your book would not shake me. No book in the world could, though I am not at all pious.

Annette had a mass read to-day, in the I fear vain hope of receiving a letter from her husband, who has not once written since you sent him the money. Poor old woman!

I trust the money reached you safely through the Harpers?

Good-by. I like the thought that you are my friend. God bless you.

W.

I.

"*La vie est brève, un peu d'espoir,*" "Leduc sang as he came slowly up the slope, the letter in his hand: "*Un peu de rêve, et puis bonsoir!*" "

Saxe rolled over, brushing the pine needles from his coat. "Hurry up!" he called.

Leduc's vivid blue eyes twinkled under their wrinkled lids as he put the letter into Saxe's outstretched hand.

"M'sieu is pretty old to be so excited by a letter from a woman. Pretty old!"

"Old? I? I am twenty-five this evening in feelings and in appetite. Did you get the coffee?"

Leduc grunted. "Yes an' the deviled ham, an' the whiskey. Leduc tired, Leduc must sleep two-three minutes, — then he make the fire."

Throwing himself face downward on the fragrant earth, he was silent.

Saxe watched him, an amused smile in his eyes.

"The facile sleep of the man of rudimentary conscience and a good digestion. The man is to be envied, — by another than me, however."

The letter expected for days lay on Saxe's updrawn knees: a long, slim white envelope, addressed in a very clear, unadorned handwriting, "To the Author of *The Pessimist's Breviary*," and re-addressed by a clerk in his publisher's office. He turned it over; the blue seal was small and perfect.

"When I held out my hand to take it," the man mused, "it trembled. I both felt and saw it tremble. Once more, Richard Saxe, I ask you, on your honor, are you in love with her?"

A snore from Leduc being the only answer to his question, he took a knife from his pocket and carefully cut the letter open.

It was five o'clock in the evening, and the ochre seams in the big pines about him were crimson in the sunlight.

The ground, modulating gently to a little blue lake, was bare of grass, warm with rich tints of brown, and swept with swift shadows as the wind stirred the branches high above. To the left stood a small cabin, flanked by a dingy tent.

Saxe read his letter slowly, often going back and re-studying a phrase, his expression changing curiously in his perfect freedom from observation. His face was that of a man close on middle age, with a handsome nose and chin, small brilliant eyes that shone behind rimless glasses, a broad, well-modeled brow shadowed by a lock of stiff brown hair, and a heavy, short-cut mustache streaked with gray. His muscular throat, bared by a low-collared flannel shirt, lent him a youthful air that he would have lacked in more civilized clothes, and his clever looking hands, though brown, were distinctly the hands of a student. Once he laid down the letter, and taking off his eyeglasses with a little downward swoop of three fingers, opened and closed his eyes several times in rapid succession, in a way evidently characteristic, before putting them on again.

"Beast!" he said aloud once, and then a quick smile at himself flashed two dimples in his cheeks.

At last Leduc grunted, rolled over, and awoke. "Bien, bien, bien, bien," he muttered, yawning. "I dream M'sieu have the fire all built for poor old Leduc!"

"Leduc had better hurry and build the fire for poor old M'sieu. The trout is cleaned, and in the pail there. I'll attend to the coffee while you fry him."

Leduc paused, looking down at him shrewdly. "De bonnes nouvelles, M'sieu?"

"Yes. Very good. More than — get to work, man."

"When I was the age of M'sieu, there was a little English girl in Bangor, — pretty to eat, I tell you. My God, how I love that girl, — when I was the age of M'sieu!"

"Why did n't you marry her?" asked Saxe, rising too, and walking the old man toward the cabin.

"Oh, — she was married, — and me, too. Telle est la vie. Rotten old world!"

"Rotten old Leduc! I forgot you were a Frenchman. Unmarried Frenchmen never fall in love with girls, do they?"

Leduc scrutinized his innocent face sharply, and then, satisfied of his good faith, "No, we marries them, but we do not love them. Oh no. I too have passed that way. I too married a girl. Là, là, — where is that trout?"

He disappeared behind the cabin, and a few minutes later Saxe heard him burst into a shout of laughter, and exclaim: "Holy Mother of God, he has cut off its head!"

Saxe apologized. He *had* cut the trout's head off, half through ignorance, half through absent-mindedness, and felt thoroughly ashamed of himself. He was feeling very happy, moreover, and quite willing to apologize to nearly any one for nearly anything.

As he poured out a glass of whiskey, he smiled at it absently and said to Leduc: "Nothing like a 'nice comforting vice,' is there?"

"Vice? M'sieu! But yes, M'sieu is right, only I should choose not whiskey. Whiskey make a brute of a man. A pig."

"I may say without vanity that neither would it be my choice. By Jove, smell that coffee!"

The fire, burnt down to a steady glow, cast a faint circle of beautiful light around the two men sitting by it. The fish, nailed to a strip of board, was half cooked; the fragrance of the coffee mingled with the pine smell as a cone crackled from time to time, sending a spray of sparks into the closing in darkness. An owl hooted. Saxe sat with his arms clasped about his knees, his eyeglasses glinting in the firelight, his forehead white under the lock of hair.

Leduc, a picturesque enough figure, knelt close in the glow, shifting the board to which the decapitated trout, ruined, according to him, for boiling, was nailed. Suddenly the old man turned, and dropped the board full in the fire.

"Can you kindly show us the way to Lake Silver Camp?"

The speaker stood close by him, her face in the light, his back to it. "Lake Silver?"

"I am looking for a guide there, Lucien Bonnet."

Leduc rose. "Sacristi, Annette!"

Saxe sat perfectly still. It all seemed to have happened before. The burning fish hissed, the coffee boiled over. Leduc and the little woman stood staring at each other; then she put her hand to her face and burst into tears.

Saxe rose and left the firelight.

She was standing just outside its radius, and as he approached, a sudden leap of the flame fed by the pine board flashed over her.

"Let us — leave them alone, poor things," he said.

The boat was drawn up in the sand, and they sat down on it in silence.

At last she said, "Is it really he, — Bonnet?"

"Yes. But — I knew him — they all do hereabouts — as Leduc. You must believe that."

"I must believe that? What do you mean?" she returned, struck by his tone.

"I mean that I did n't know. I am Richard Saxe, and you are 'Our Lady of the Beeches.'"

There was a short silence, while the water lapped the sand with soft lips, and the trees stirred overhead. He could barely see the outlines of her figure, it was so dark; he looked in vain for the moon; the mesh of waving darkness overhead was studded with stars.

"Hush!" she said suddenly. "He is crying, too."

"Le Mioche," suggested Saxe.

Then he smiled to himself. Leduc's tears were very near the surface.

"Where has he been, do you know?" she asked, rising and facing him. "He did not come, and he never wrote."

"Yes, he has been on a spree, — to Bangor."

"To Bangor!" She laughed softly.

"Yes, he told me of the spree, but I never suspected that you furnished the money for it. You and I."

They both laughed again.

All at once she turned. "What is burning? It is your supper!"

"It is my supper; my only trout. Let it burn."

But she sped up the path; he saw her slight figure bend easily over the fire, there was a splash of sparks, another laugh, and she stood upright, her face in the light beckoning to him.

"It is a charcoal — ruined — a wreck. And those two old — geese — have disappeared. I hope they have n't gone altogether!"

"I should n't mind," answered Saxe recklessly. "But they are only in the cabin."

"Oh, you have a cabin? How disappointing."

She turned, with a little gesture of disapproval that delighted him.

"The cabin is Leduc — Bonnet's. Behold my habitation."

"Ah, a tent. That is much better."

She sat down, leaning against the very tree on which he had leaned two hours before while reading her letter, and took off her hat. Her fair hair was ruffled into a roughness of little curls and tendrils; her cheeks were flushed. Saxe stood looking at her.

From the cabin window came a narrow strip of yellow light and the sound of voices.

"If you don't put on some wood, the fire will be out in two minutes."

He started. "Yes, — I will put on a log."

While he bent over the fire an idea struck him. "You will have a cup of coffee? It is good."

"Yes. I am hungry."

She smiled on him with the serenity common to some women when a man is on their account beside himself with embarrassment — or any other emotion. He poured out the coffee, gave her sugar and condensed milk; he rushed to the cabin and brought out a tin of "water crackers" and another of deviled ham. A small box — it had held candles — did duty as her table. He watched her eat.

"Don't you want to know how we happened to drop in on you in this way?" she asked, after a time.

"Yes, I want to know," he answered with an effort. "Your letter came this afternoon. It was written in England."

She dropped her cracker, and looked away. "My letter," she repeated — "which letter? I never" — A slow flush, deliciously visible in the now vivid firelight, was creeping from her high white collar to the loose hair on her brow.

Saxe's courage came back with a rush. "Yes, your letter. The best of them all. The one about the fool who dared to make love to you. To you! You ended by bidding God bless me."

She set down her cup, and rose. "Mr. Saxe, — or do I mean Dr. Saxe? — that was all very well, it was amusing, and harmless, so long as we didn't know each other, but now that we do — in a way — you must forget all that. Although," she went on, in a lighter tone and with a little smile, "I am off to-morrow, so after all it doesn't make much difference."

Saxe winced.

"I must forget all that. And you are off to-morrow?"

"Yes, I go back to civilization, leaving Annette." As she spoke, the old

woman and the old man came out of the cabin, and approached the fire.

"Monsieur must excuse me," Leduc began at once, in French, wiping his eyes. "It is my wife. She comes all the way from Paris to look me up."

Saxe held out his hand to the old woman. "I cannot tell you how glad I am that you found us," he said. "Sit down and have some supper."

"Thank you, sir," she answered, in far better English than her husband could boast. "We drove over from Windsor."

"Mademoiselle will permit the old man to kiss her hand, after all these years?" Leduc bowed in a graceful way that amused Saxe in the midst of his bewildered pain. Going away to-morrow!

"It is to visit the grave of our little child, sir, that I have come," Annette went on, in an undertone, to Saxe. "And Mademoiselle has come with me because I am too old to go so far alone. She is an angel."

"I am sure of it."

"What will you? Only my man knows to find the grave, and we may be gone two-three days, and who but Mademoiselle would stay all that time in the 'otel at Windsor!"

Saxe took off his eyeglasses and closed his eyes hard for a minute.

"She is going to stay at Windsor?"

"Annette, some one must tell the boy that we are coming, or he will drive off and leave us."

It was the voice of Mademoiselle.

Annette turned down the slope, and Saxe, calling after her to wait, thrust a lighted lantern into Leduc's hand and sent him after her.

Then he turned. "You say you are off to-morrow," he said quickly; "but Annette tells me that you were going to stay on at Windsor while she and — he — go to see the grave of Le Mioche. Now listen. You say I must

forget all that, now that we know each other. Very well; I promise; I will neither by word nor look, if I can help it, remind you of anything. You will have to see me only when you choose. I will do all that you wish. I have always done all that you wish. Only stay. Let them go to the grave of Le Mioche."

The old pair were coming back, the lantern danced among the trees, and Leduc's voice, piercingly sweet, sang a snatch of some old song: "*Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un instant.*"

She laughed. "Not very polite of him, after her coming all this way, is it?"

"You will stay?" he persisted, frowning over his eyeglasses.

"If I had known I was to see you" — she answered, demurring.

"But you did not. Nor I. And it is not fair to punish me for what — the gods have chosen to bring about."

"Mademoiselle, a storm is coming up, and the boy refuses to wait," Annette said, coming toward them.

The trees were tossing, the wind moaning.

"Yes, you must go," assented Saxe, a little roughly.

She put on her hat without speaking, and they followed the lantern to the waiting wagon.

"Well?" he said suddenly, stopping.

"I — I would rather go."

"No. Stay. You forget the chief thing," he added, forcing a laugh. "I do not, need not, know your name, Mademoiselle! Can't you stay?"

"Mademoiselle," she repeated, hesitating. Then, holding out her hand, "Very well. I will stay; you will not know my name, and — you will forget the rest. We will begin over!"

Saxe awoke at dawn, a sound of beating mingling with the every-day one of Leduc's piercingly sweet voice raised in his favorite "*La vie est vaine.*" Vague

reminiscences of house-cleaning, years ago in his grandmother's day, stirred his brain; he opened his eyes to find his tent flooded with rosy light; to see, beyond, a patch of blue sky, blurred and broken by stiff pine branches. He remembered, and reaching for his eyeglasses, put them on.

"I say, Leduc, — Bonnet, — whatever your name is!"

"M'sieu?"

Leduc's face, rosy as the drawn itself in spite of his age, appeared in the open flap, his soft curly hair ruffled.

"What the deuce is that noise?"

The old man entered unceremoniously, a stout stick in his hand.

"It is that I am preparing for Annette, M'sieu. She has eyes like a hawk, and a tongue like a scourge."

"So it *was* house-cleaning!"

"C'est ça. I've been beating my mattress. The dust in that mattress was something *étonnant*! and not a grain would have escaped her. A terrible woman!"

Saxe turned over lazily. "Then you think she will be coming again to-day?"

Leduc rose and took up his stick. "Coming? M'sieu — she love Leduc, that old woman. It is a cur'ous thing, by gum! Twenty years ago she left Leduc. He treated her pretty bad, an' she could n't stand it, so off she went at the end. Now — here she is."

"You know perfectly well that she has n't come on your account, you old scoundrel," returned Saxe, watching him.

"Comment ça? Why then? Why she come?"

"Le Mioche."

Leduc turned and looked out into the morning.

"Tiens, Le Mioche!"

"Yes, Le Mioche. Now look here, Leduc. Did I, or did I not, pay you well, last year?"

"Oui, monsieur" —

"Did I, or did I not, give you a new rifle, and a present in money besides?"

"M'sieu was very good — M'sieu is galant homme."

The old man turned, his face irradiated with the most enchanting of smiles.

Saxe went on, rubbing his eyeglasses on a corner of his blanket. "Very well. If you want another present this time, — say that setter of Sam Bradley's and some money, — you, too, are going to behave like a — galant homme!"

"M'sieu, Leduc is a galant homme. Leduc a bad man, but he always been a slave to women."

"Nonsense! I don't want you to be a slave, but I won't have you disappoint — Annette."

"M'sieu a raison. Poor Annette, she would be very sad. Also Mademoiselle."

"Also Mademoiselle," agreed Saxe, without flinching from the keen eyes fixed on him.

"What does M'sieu wish me to do?" asked the old man, unable, as he always was, to look long into Saxe's face, and turning away.

"I want you to be as decent as your instincts, partly inherited, no doubt, also partly acquired, will allow you." Then with a mischievous delight he went on slowly: "Those fools who deny atavism, inherited tendency, the whole Darwinian theory, should be confronted in a body, my good Leduc, with you. You are a most beautiful example of all of those things. The shape of your head is distinctly simian; your instincts are simian, — splendidly so. You have spent the greater part of your life in the humanizing influence of great trees, and yet you are untouched by any of the qualities that emanate from them. Amazing, amazing!"

There was a short pause, after which the old man, passing his hand through his hair as if to feel the shape of his head, said: —

"M'sieu wishes to bathe, this morning? What time does M'sieu want his coffee?"

Saxe looked at his watch. "Be ready for me at half-past six — and remember: one word to disappoint your poor wife, — no dog, no present."

Leduc straightened up. "It is not necessary for M'sieu to menacer. Leduc have a heart, and Leduc grows old."

Then he went out with a beautiful dignity of carriage.

Saxe splashed about in the still gilded waters of the little lake for ten minutes, dressed, and appeared at the fire at promptly half-past six. Breakfast was ready. Coffee, fried eggs, bacon, and johnny-cake. Leduc, in a clean flannel shirt, his hair still separated into gleaming, wavy locks by the recent passage of a wet comb, awaited him.

When Saxe had demonstrated his good humor by praise of the johnny-cake, the old man began gravely: —

"M'sieu — Leduc wants to tell M'sieu something."

"To tell me something?"

"Oui, M'sieu — Leduc has no children, he is a poor solitary old man — except when M'sieu is with him."

Saxe bowed his acknowledgment of this compliment in silence.

"But Leduc, — Leduc has here in his breast — what no one can take from him. A memory."

The sharp blue eyes were wet. Saxe put down his cup and watched him, a frown of interest between his brows.

"Years ago — Leduc had a little child. A little child with so yellow curls. God sent it to Leduc to make him a better man. But God got tired of trying and took Le Mioche."

"For Heaven's sake, man, stop it!"

Saxe rose impatiently and turned away. A squirrel rushed across an opening in the trees, his plummy tail erect; birds were singing everywhere; a little yellow flower peered out from the mossy roots of the one beech near. Saxe stooped and picked the flower with gentle fingers, and after looking at it

. That's why I
elle.' Her real

low, do you think
al name?"

he scraped the
bacon together
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na von Hutten.

closely, laid it between the leaves of
his notebook.

"M'sieu!"

He turned. Leduc's face was white,
his eyes dry. "M'sieu, you wrong an
old man. Leduc a bad man, a liar,
he beat his wife when he was drunk,
he cheat at cards. But Leduc love Le
Mioche. Le Mioche love him. M'sieu
scold about Annette. Bien — I am
sorry she comes, — ça m'ennuie, — but
M'sieu go to the grave of Le Mioche
and he will see how many white stones!
Thirty-one. Every year one. Leduc
did not forget Le Mioche, M'sieu."

He was telling the truth, and the
poor dignity in his voice touched Saxe,
who held out his hand.

"I beg your pardon, Leduc. I was
wrong, and I am sorry."

Leduc shook his hand and sat down
again in silence.

"Monsieur," he said at last, in one
of his accesses of good French, "you
are very wise, and I am an ignorant
old scoundrel, but I have taught you
one thing that you did not know be-
fore. The worst of men has his one
good quality. The blackest of sheep
has its one white hair. It is bad to
be too pessimistic."

Saxe repressed a smile at the old
man's vain delight in himself as an
exposition of this theory, and went on
with his breakfast.

"M'sieu, Mademoiselle is pretty,
is n't she?"

Saxe started. "Pretty, oh yes.
Very pretty, and very good — I gather
from your wife."

"Yes, very good. I know her since

she was a little baby
still say 'Mademoi-
name is' —

"My very good fel-
I do not know her re-

Leduc started, as
remaining shreds of
preparatory to mopp-
bit of bread. "M's-
fore?"

"Of course I knew
turned the other ma-
glasses and opening h-
"Why should n't I k-

"Dieu, que le mon-
that is very nice fo-
M'sieu here, — and ve-
— as the other lady?

"The other lady?
"The lady who
M'sieu's eyes chang-
not blind! Last year
ter, too" —

Saxe considered a
vaguely seeing a ser-
to be derived from th-
aloud.

"Leduc certainly i-
he says, I cannot hav-
letters, so it will be v-
me to see something
who is charming, too.

"I suppose M'sieu
ing to the woods any-

The old man, enco-
riosity, smiled know-
be marrying this win-

"Everything is po-
of possible worlds.
chatterbox, hurry and
mess!"

Betti-

(To be continued.)

MIDSUMMER'S DAY.

WHENCE comes he? He is all distraught.
A bramble in his hair is caught,
And there are dreams within his eyes
From regions of the upper skies,
Found in deep forest pools that drowse
Under low interlacing boughs
And for a moment wake to paint
Unreal parallels, when faint
With breath of nectaries blown bare
A wind steals from one knows not where.

In that obscure where he has been
What are the wonders he has seen?
In steam of marish spots and springs
Touched by the noon, what startled things,
What great eyes glancing through green gloom,
What faces fashioned out of bloom, —
Where creatures of the azure mists
Weave their enchantment, what bright lists
Of airy shapes, and what swift flight
Up the long pencils of the light,
What phantoms turning as they fled?
What voices lured, what beckoning led?

Forbid to all but such as he,
They say he read the charactery,
On bark and stem, of mystic runes.
They say he heard forgotten tunes,
Sung when the moons were young, — oh, sweet, —
And only broken measures fleet
Homeless till some blest listener hears
The bitter music sealed in tears!
They say he saw sweep over him
Or whirling scarf, or flashing limb,
That something liefer touched his lips
Than honey that the wild bee sips,
That something whispered him all day —
While in a trance of joy he lay
And flower-soft fingers brushed his brow —
The secrets known to no man now.
In some deep dell with mosses lined
They say he left his soul behind.

The chantry tolled beyond the wood
As if from outer solitude.
Softly the day drew down; and far

The African Pygmies.

As echoes falling from a star
 The children called him. And he came, —
 And on his face immortal flame.
 For the dark wood had held him fast,
 The leaves a subtle sorcery cast,
 The briers bound him, the wild sprays
 Tangled his feet in dear delays,
 Tendrils would clasp, and waterfalls
 Foam round him, and he broke through walls
 Of living amethyst where sun
 And haze and distance wrought as one.

And you will know him from the look
 Of men by happiness forsook, —
 Since he had been that time made free
 Of the first court of poesy,
 Nor till midsummer's day return,
 And skies are blue and roses burn,
 Shall he set foot within those dim
 Delightful ranges, nor for him
 Those vaporous barriers be stirred —
 For he has lost the magic word.

Harriet Prescott Spofford.

 THE AFRICAN PYGMIES.

NOT long after my settlement at Ndombe, the town of a remarkable monarch of the same name, the king of the Balunda tribes around Wissmann Falls, Central Africa, an odd-looking creature came up to my bungalow, bringing a piece of fresh meat for sale. At first I took him for a boy, judging by his height and size, for he was about four feet high, and could not have weighed more than eighty pounds. As he came closer and held out his meat, making a peculiar guttural sound, I noticed that he appeared to be an old man. His form was slightly bent, his hair and beard were tinged with white, the lines were deeply sunken in his face, and his deep-set eyes were glazed with the film of age.

I began to question him, having become proficient in the native tongues, and was surprised to discover that I could

not understand my extraordinary visitor. His language sounded more like the gabbling of an ape than the ordered speech of the intelligent Balunda; but when I brought out the salt which is the universal currency in that country, his eyes sparkled, and a broad smile and beaming face rendered further efforts at conversation unnecessary to the trade. The little man grinned, laid his meat on the floor, readjusted his quiver of darts, picked up the bow he had laid aside, and started down the path, to all appearances supremely happy.

Turning to one of the boys in my employ, I asked who that man was. The boy answered, "Oh, he is one of the Batwa." The word had no sooner been uttered than I seized my helmet and started off in pursuit of the stranger; for I had read enough of African ethnology

to know that Batwa meant Pygmies, and here was a chance not to be lost.

My visitor was not far ahead, and did not seem to be alarmed at my following him, for soon he led me into a clearing in the adjacent plain, not more than a few hundred yards from my house, in which a little hamlet was ensconced. The Pygmy, if such he was, entered one of the beehive huts, and ousted a swarm of children, who scampered wildly about at sight of the white man. The boy who had given the name Batwa to my caller had followed me, and I now turned to him for more information concerning this strange village. He said that the Batwa were little people who lived to themselves, and were much afraid of the big people; that those in this town were under the authority of Ndombe, who would not destroy them, but kept them to hunt and fish for him. A few questions to the boy, and a careful study of the town and people, assured me that my next door neighbors were none others than the Pygmies of Herodotus, the fabled dwarfs of Ethiopia in reality and truth. From that time I began a close study of the life, condition, manners, customs, and language of these remarkable people, for the three years during which I lived among them.

The village of the Batwa was located in the suburbs of the town of Ndombe, the nephew of Mai Munene, who founded a famous African kingdom at the head of navigation of the Kasai tributary of the Congo River. The proximity of this Pygmy settlement to the principal city of tribes long noted for their large stature and fine physique was a unique fact in my knowledge of these people. Stanley, and most of the other explorers who had described them, had represented them as inhabiting the densest forests, and as being entirely separate from the other Africans, but this settlement was on the edge of the great plateau of Lunda, and under the sovereignty of a distinctly alien tribe.

Ndombe's town is situated on the crest of the watershed of the Kasai and Lubi rivers, and about fifteen miles above their confluence at Wissmann Falls, a series of cataracts in the former stream, so called in honor of the celebrated governor of German East Africa. This region is about five degrees south latitude and twenty-two degrees east longitude, with an average elevation of twenty-five hundred feet, some of the peaks of the Chrystal Range rising to over six thousand feet. The plateau of Lunda stretches from the Wissmann Falls to the Zambezi divide, embracing a territory about the size of Texas.

The population of Ndombe's capital is about five thousand, and that of the suburban Pygmies about three hundred. The Batwa formed a distinct village of their own, with no other inhabitants save their immediate chief or mayor, and his wife. This man was of Ndombe's own family, the representative of the king, who acted as the sub-chief of the Pygmy village under Ndombe's general suzerainty. His authority seemed never to be disputed, and through him the dwarfs paid their tribute of game and fish daily to the king. The Pygmies dwelt in little huts shaped like a beehive, with an opening on the side at the bottom, barely large enough to admit their bodies crawling. These houses were built by bending sticks into the shape of a bow, placing the ends in the ground, and thus forming a framework, upon which a matting of large leaves was tied with the fibres of the palm. These huts, although a full-grown normal African could not stand erect or recline at full length in them, sufficed for a Pygmy and his whole family, sometimes consisting of a wife and half a dozen children. About eighty of these little dwellings were arranged without any order or design upon the slope of the hill toward the Lubi, near the meeting place of the grassy plains and the tangled forests, which constituted the Pygmies' happy hunting grounds. The village cov-

ered about three acres, and was dotted here and there with the characteristic trees of the African plains, the baobab, euphorbia, and palm. Besides these, the wife of the Bakuba chief of the Pygmies had planted the village with plantains, bananas, and pineapples, also the never-failing pawpaw, red pepper, and castor-oil bushes. It is noteworthy that this planting was not done by the Pygmies, who did absolutely no agricultural work at all.

From the limbs of the trees about the houses hung uncanny trophies of the skill of the Batwa at the chase, — the head-bones of the antelope and buffalo, the skeletons of monkeys, boars, and large rodents, the skins of snakes, the scaly armor of the ant-eater, the feathers of many large birds, the shells of the porpoise, and the head and vertebræ of many large fishes. Immense nets, made both for hunting and fishing, were thrown over poles suspended under grass sheds about the village, while the walls of the little huts bristled with spears, knives, bows, and arrows, traps, harpoons, and hunting horns. Yellow dogs, whose diminutive dimensions were in proportion to those of their masters, prowled about the open spaces between the houses, jangling the peculiar wooden bells which were fastened about their necks. One striking peculiarity of these African curs is that they do not bark, and so the bells are put upon them to enable the huntsmen to follow. Often the dogs themselves are eaten by the Africans, but I never found the Pygmies guilty of this unsportsmanlike conduct. Neither was I ever able to detect any evidences of cannibalism on the part of the little people.

The life of the Pygmies was concerned chiefly in the procuring of meat for themselves and for the larger tribes with whom they traded. They were expert huntsmen and fishermen, their principal weapon being the bow and arrow with its poisoned wooden dart, the most formid-

able of all the implements of savage African warfare. The bow of the Pygmies was made from the wood of a very strong and tough tree, the color of the heart of which was bright crimson; the bowstring was made of a fibre stripped from the body of a rattan vine growing in the swamps. This fibre produced a string perfectly pliable, and exceeding a rawhide in strength. The Pygmies were often shorter than their bows. The arrow was a light straight piece of bamboo, usually the stem of the frond of one of the smaller palms. This frond stem was cylindrical in shape, and hollow throughout its length, the woody fibre being wonderfully strong and light. Contrary to the practice among larger tribes, these arrows were neither tipped with iron, nor furnished with the feathery barb. They were simply the neatly trimmed bamboo sticks, sharpened at the top and cleft at the bottom, the sharp point being thickly smeared with a dark poison. It is the last fact which makes these simple contrivances such deadly weapons. The poison is one of the most fatal known. It is decocted from the roots of one of the euphorbias by boiling and pressing them, a black sticky scum rising to the surface, into which the points of the arrows are dipped. The scum is very adhesive, and also impregnates the wood of the arrowhead, which is made from a certain kind of timber specially for the purpose.

The effect of this poison is more deadly than that of any vegetable poison with which I am acquainted. It has been known to produce death within two minutes of its administration to a human being. The ordinary way to test its efficacy among the Africans is to try it on a monkey, and the usual result is death in less than five minutes. The use of the poison in war or the chase depends upon the infliction of a very slight wound on the victim by the point of the arrow, the small amount of poison thus put into the system sufficing to cause death.

Sometimes, however, instead of death, the effect is insanity.

I noted several instances of the terrible effects of these poisoned arrows. A man of Ndombe's town insulted one of the Pygmies and was shot in the thigh. Despite all that the medicine men could do in the way of charms and various hoodoo practices, besides using certain herbs and roots which are often efficacious in ordinary ailments, the wounded man died in great agony after several hours of delirious coma. On another occasion the poison was administered as an ordeal to a woman accused of witchcraft, and she died in less than half an hour. A man in my employ was once going down the Kasai River in a canoe, and was attacked by some of the savage Baschilele tribe, who were armed with these poisoned arrows obtained from the Pygmies. The man sustained a scratch on the forehead from a passing arrow. Although the wound was so slight as to be almost invisible to the eye, the poor fellow went violently insane, lingered for two weeks, and then died in terrible convulsions.

Once, in making a survey of the upper Kasai valley, I had occasion to ascend a high mountain, upon whose summit I walked about, compass in hand, taking observations. Suddenly, without the least warning, I fell violently into the earth. I had come upon a concealed pit, made to impale antelopes upon sharpened stakes set in the bottom. One of these stakes penetrated my thigh and caused a severe wound. My only attendant, a boy of fourteen years, ran down the mountain and secured men, who carried me quickly to an adjacent village. The boy sucked the wound thoroughly, and the native doctors cauterized it by pouring boiling oil into it, thus no doubt saving my life and reason. I was dangerously ill for a month, and suffered for three years afterwards. The sucking of the wound and the cautery were at my own suggestion.

The use of these poisoned arrows by the Pygmies in killing game is wonderfully effective. The flesh around the wound is excised, and the rest of the meat is eaten with impunity. With its coat of poison, the puny bamboo reed becomes more fatal than the Krag-Jorgensen or Martini-Henry. With his bow and arrows the Pygmy is more than a match for any denizen of the African jungle; he kills the elephant, buffalo, antelope, leopard, hyena, jackal, and the numberless smaller animals of forest and plain, besides guinea-fowl, water-fowl, and others of the feathered tribe. The Batwa of Ndombe's village frequently brought in meat from these different animals, part of which went to Ndombe as his regular tribute, the rest being kept for their own use, or exchanged for the farinaceous produce of the Bikenge. Once the dwarfs brought in immense chunks of a huge python, which they found asleep after making his monthly meal of a whole antelope, horns, hoof, and all. The total length of the tremendous snake was twenty-six feet, and his body was as thick as a man's thigh. There was wild excitement in the Pygmies' town, and the other natives flocked in from far and wide to see the monster and enjoy the feast. It may be remarked here that the Pygmies' diet includes everything from the soft bodies of the white ant to the hippopotamus. I have known them to shake caterpillars from the trees, and dry them in the sun, preserving them as a special delicacy; and the locust, upon which John the Baptist fed in the wilderness, is as highly esteemed among them as the shrimp or lobster among the epicures of the West.

The method of hunting the monkey, the eating of which must have been the beginning of anthropophagy, is most interesting. A clearing of about half an acre is made in the forest where the simians abound; a net ten feet high and forty feet long, made from a very tough

and strong fibrous plant, is stretched across this clearing. The Pygmies then drive the monkeys from the forest into the clearing. When the monkeys attempt to cross the open space, they no longer find the convenient branches of the trees which have hitherto assisted them in their flight, and are forced to rush across the clearing on the ground. When they come upon the net, they are sorely puzzled, and instead of trying to climb over it, vainly strive to get through the meshes, and in this bewildered condition are set upon by the Pygmies with their bows and arrows and spears, and a general slaughter ensues. One reason why this method of hunting the monkey is followed is that a wounded monkey is so very difficult to pursue in the mazes of the forests.

The fact that the Pygmies did not cultivate the soil at all was established by careful and prolonged investigation, and is one of the most remarkable characteristics of these people. At the time of my residence among them, they had been in the habit for centuries past of trading the meat from the chase for produce of the fields of the Bantu. The latter people engaged quite extensively in raising food supplies of various kinds. Their principal implement is the hoe, the blade of which their blacksmiths make from the abundant magnetic iron ore of the country, the handle of the hoe being a short stick about two feet long, with a hole bored through a knot in the end, for the attachment of the blade. The Bantu women use this hoe exclusively, as they have neither plough, spade, shovel, nor any other agricultural implement. With this primitive hoe, however, they plant and cultivate corn, peas, beans, onions, tomatoes, tobacco, cotton, melons, pepper, and various tropical fruits and vegetables, besides the universal manioc, plantain, and peanut. The word for peanut, by the way, in the language of Ndombe, is "Ngoobah."

None of these products, which the

African soil and climate cause to flourish with such ease and abundance, have ever been cultivated by the Pygmies. The dwarfs, before the advent of the larger tribes, were literally wild men of the woods, who subsisted entirely on the bounty of unaided nature. The indigenous and uncultivated edibles of the African soil were considered ample for their needs. They lived on the roots and tubers of trees and of certain plants resembling the Irish potato, the young and tender shoots of succulent bushes, and the acidulous fruits occurring in great quantity in the forest, which the monkeys feed upon with avidity.

The relations of the Batwa to Ndombe and the powerful Balunda were unique. According to the traditions of both people, many ages previously the Pygmies had been the sole inhabitants and the undisputed masters of the vast territories now occupied by the dominant races in Africa. Then the forefathers of the Bantu came down from the Northeast, and began to fight the Pygmies. The latter represent these early conflicts as long and bitter. Some of the dwarfs escaped into the depths of the remote forests, into whose gloomy wilds the conquering invaders would not follow them. This accounts for Stanley's discovery of them in the Aruwimi forests, and explains his impression that the Pygmies were never found elsewhere in association with the other Africans. But some of the little people were captured in those ancient wars, and kept near their captors until their shyness wore off, and they were willing to live with them on friendly terms. It was in this way that Ndombe's kingdom came to embrace this settlement of the dwarfs. It is possible that the superior tribes could never have overcome the Pygmies had they not learned the secret of the manufacture and use of the poisoned arrows of the latter. But there never was any inter-marriage between the two peoples, nor did either adopt the ways of the other.

Both remained separate and distinct, though living side by side for centuries. The Pygmies did not increase rapidly in numbers, and barely kept up their existence from generation to generation. In this they appear to have been already a moribund race when the larger men came down upon them.

The complete confidence of Ndombe and his people facilitated my intercourse with the Pygmies. This ripened into the most friendly association when the little people found me such a steady customer for their game, the more so as the principal article which I had to offer was what they most earnestly coveted — common salt. The craving for chloride of sodium is enhanced by the fact that the chief mineral ingredient of the food of the African aborigines is a kind of chlorate of potash obtained by precipitating a lye made from the ashes of a marsh weed. Although there are deposits of rock salt in different parts of the continent, the natives have not learned to use it. The potash salt is so very inferior to the "white man's salt," as the blacks call our article, that the latter commands fabulous prices in the remote interior, where I was located. Salt is more precious than gold in the opinion of the Pygmies. As I was fairly well supplied with the coveted relish, my eager little neighbors undertook to barter all the meat they could persuade me to take for it. In this way quite a familiarity sprang up between us, and I was enabled to collect much detailed information concerning them.

The clothing of the Pygmies was the most primitive of all I saw in Africa. The children and some of the women were nude, and the best clad of them wore nothing more than a yard of palm fibre around their loins, this garment being obtained from the other tribes. Some wore pieces of fibre of the size of a pocket handkerchief suspended from a string around the waist, while others were content with leaves or grass. They

had no looms, and manufactured no cloth as the other natives did. The favorite ornamental garment among them was the skin of a large baboon. I never saw a single Pygmy tattooed in any way. They often made amulets or charms of the skin or bones of small animals. They did not wear the beads or brass and copper wire which were affected by the Balunda, but they often wore the gay feathers of some bird in their woolly hair.

The extreme simplicity of the manners and customs of the Pygmies was in striking contrast to the more complex life of the other races. Ndombe's people, for example, had been enjoying for centuries the advantages accruing from the subdivision of labor, somewhat on the lines of more civilized countries. The Balunda had blacksmiths, wood-carvers, weavers, mat-makers, manufacturers, besides lawyers, medicine men, governmental officials such as constables, tax-collectors, and executioners with chieftains and petty governors under the greater kings. The Pygmies had none of these. The governmental system under which the Batwa lived at Ndombe was imposed on them by the king. Nor had their system ever been even patriarchal. In most of these matters the aboriginal race of Pygmies must have been the most primitive race of mankind.

The poverty of the Pygmies alone restricted their naturally polygamous tendencies. The other Africans enjoy as many wives and concubines as they have means to buy. There are so few distinctions of wealth among the Pygmies that their women are pretty evenly divided among them. They are also much less prolific than the larger tribes. Their children are precocious, being exposed early to the hardening influences of their parents' lives, and made to shift for themselves as soon as they can catch mice, or dig up roots. While the men hunt and fish, the women search for the

wild food of the plain and forest, or barter meat for the food of the Balunda.

The average height of fifty grown men of the Batwa village was fifty-one and seven eighths inches, or four feet and nearly four inches. Seven men averaged less than three feet and nine inches high, and five of them were over four feet, six inches. It was very difficult to persuade the women to submit to measurement, but eight of them, mothers of families, averaged forty-seven and three eighths inches, four inches shorter than the men. The prevalent color was a light chocolate brown. The older men wore scanty beards.

The head of the Pygmy is of the brachycephalic order. The mean cranial index of the skulls of eight adult males is eighty-one degrees. The nose is small, but more aquiline than that of the real Negro. The mouth is large, and the chin usually receding. The hair is of a lighter color, — almost a shade of brown, — and is kinky and woolly. His hands and feet are small and well shaped, the hands in particular being delicately formed. In proportion to his size, his strength far exceeds that of all the other Africans. His powers of endurance on the march or in the chase are phenomenal. Fifty miles a day is an ordinary march for him, and he is almost as much at home in the trees as the monkeys themselves. The senses of the Pygmies are unusually acute. At quite a distance, they can distinguish the chameleon from the foliage in which it is hidden, notwithstanding the fact that the color of the little animal coincides with that of its hiding place. Much of their quarry is discovered through the powers of the nose, and it is no exaggeration to say that the Pygmies' sense of smell is as keen as that of their dogs. They are such shots with the bow that I have seen one send an arrow through a rat at twenty yards, while it was running through the village. The Bantu would spear fish as

they leaped from the water, or darted among the rocks in the streams.

As might be expected, the chief characteristic of the Pygmy's mind is cunning. Ages of warfare with ferocious beasts, and long periods of struggling against tribes of men physically superior to them, have made the little people so famous for treachery, sly dexterity, and extraordinary agility, that the words "Mudimuki mu mutwa" (sharp as a Pygmy) have become the favorite simile of the Bantu race.

The language of the Batwa is the most strongly onomatopoeic of any with which I am acquainted. The names of animals are made of sounds most characteristic of the beasts they describe. "Elephant" is "humba-humba;" "snake" is "luwilya-wilya" (note how this word squirms). The verbs describe actions imitatively. The vocabulary is much more limited than that of the Bantu. The Batwa appear to have very few, if any, abstract ideas.

The religion of the Pygmies consisted primarily in the worship of the sun. They were not idolatrous — the sun was worshiped as God, and the moon was feared as the devil. They made no images of material objects, and had very few of the superstitious practices of the other Africans.

After my acquaintance with the Pygmies had ripened into complete mutual confidence, I once made bold to tell them that some of the wise men of my country asserted that they had descended from the apes of the forest. This statement, far from provoking mirth, met with a storm of indignant protestation, and furnished the theme for many a heated discussion around the Batwa firesides. The sequel of the matter was an amusing occasion, when a venerable grandfather among the Pygmies turned the tables on me. One day a young ape of the Soko species was brought to my house as a present to me from my little neighbors. A gray-haired old Pygmy watched the

antics of the young Soko, the peculiarity of which consisted in its perfectly white face and hair. Turning his eyes on the Saxon propounder of the insulting hypothesis concerning his progenitors, and noting that Saxon and Soko alike were strikingly white, the shrewd old chap dryly asked: "If we black Batwa come from black monkeys in the forest, who then comes from that Soko there?"

The history of the Batwa tribe of the Pygmies is involved in the general history of all the dwarf races. It has been shown by exhaustive research that this species of the *genus homo* is not confined to Africa, but is widely distributed over the whole globe. My only guides to the history of the Batwa were their own traditions and those of the Bantu around them, — sources of information much more trustworthy than is often supposed. The Africans are very careful to conserve their traditions, and the old men gather the young ones about their firesides, and relate to them the lore of their people and the deeds of their fathers. They reckon time by the appearances of the new moon and the occurrence of such natural phenomena as earthquakes, eclipses, droughts, besides unusual wars, migrations, or any extraordinary events.

The concurrence of testimony is to the effect that the ancestors of the Pygmies many years before had exclusively occupied the vast territories throughout which they are now scattered. The statements of the Bantu and Batwa alike agreed that the latter were the only species of mankind occupying the plains of Lunda when the former came down upon them from the direction of the rising sun. The migrations of the Bantu, therefore, into Central Africa were from the direction of Egypt and Asia. When these larger people found the Pygmies, as before indicated, they began to destroy or subdue them, or to chase them into the depths of the remote forests. It is noteworthy that the Pygmies have never

developed any of the primitive arts which are practiced among the Bantu to-day. There are no signs of a stone age in Africa. This fact is of the utmost anthropological value when taken in connection with the fact that Central Africa is of extremely recent geological formation. The irruption of the Bantu, who were already in the iron age, upon the Batwa, who had not yet reached the stone age, is curiously like the superposition of volcanic strata upon a tertiary formation.

The geographical distribution of the dwarf races is much wider than has been popularly believed. The ancient Egyptians report them at the head waters of the Nile. This was confirmed by Stanley and Emin Pasha. Schweinfurth made a thorough study of a settlement of Pygmies in North Central Africa in the valley of the Welle, a branch of the Mobangi tributary of the Congo, three degrees north latitude, twenty-five degrees east longitude. Du Chaillu identified them in the Ogowe country of the Gaboon, a thousand miles southwest of Schweinfurth's investigation. Another thousand miles southeast of those found by Du Chaillu are the Batwa which I am describing, in the location already mentioned. Three hundred miles north-east of this country occurs a tribe of Pygmies mentioned by Dr. Wölff. It will thus be seen that the existence of the Pygmies has been authenticated in five different parts of Africa, over a territory much larger than the United States. Besides these it is pretty clearly established that the Hottentots and Bushmen of extreme South Africa also belong to this class.

The Pygmies are not, as has been alleged from lack of exact data, restricted solely in their habitat to the forests or impenetrable jungles. They are the residuum of complete occupation of vast continental areas. The interesting part, however, about this occupation is that no traces have been found of any human be-

ings prior to the Pygmies. In this respect, the Caucasian discoveries in North America differ totally from those in Africa. The aborigines whom the Europeans found in America had evidently been antedated by a people vastly superior to them in the arts of civilization. But the white man has found no traces of the handiwork of man preceding the Pygmies. These dwarfish beings are the most primitive of men yet discovered in the annals of history.

Reference has already been made to the existence of other Pygmy tribes. Most of these occur in different parts of the eastern hemisphere. One of the principal localities in which these Oriental Pygmies occur is in the Philippine Islands. In Luzon, particularly, black Pygmies with straight hair have been found. The other localities are the Andaman Islands, Borneo, Madagascar, the Punjab of India, the extreme western part of China, and the Malay Peninsula, while certain skulls on the Pacific coast of America point to the probability that the Pygmies, as well as the larger Asiatics, once occupied the western hemisphere.

While the indubitable existence of these Pygmy races is a fact which late modern research alone has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the scientific world, stories about the Pygmies have been current in literature from the dawn of history. The recent investigations of scientists in Africa have done much to dignify the oft-ridiculed writings of Herodotus. The Father of History records stories of his day concerning Pygmies who were said to occupy upper Egypt. Homer also makes reference to these little people, and Aristotle embellishes his account with reference to diminutive horses as well as men. Pliny places his Pygmies in a number of localities. Swift, therefore, had abundant classical ground for his Lilliputians, and a truer basis in fact than he imagined. The sober facts of the nineteenth cen-

tury have eclipsed the romances of Homer, Swift, and Defoe alike.

The philosophic speculations raised by the facts brought to light about these Batwa, Akka, Hottentots, Mincopies, and Negritos as they have been variously called, are not the least interesting results of their discovery. Who and what are they? Are they men, or the highest apes? Who and what were their ancestors? What are their ethnic relations to the other races of men? Have they degenerated from larger men, or are the larger men a development of Pygmy forefathers? These questions arise naturally, and plunge the inquirer at once into the depths of the most heated scientific discussions of this generation.

For practical consideration, we may classify these questions into three:—

1. Were the ancestors of the Pygmies larger men? That is, are the Pygmies a degenerate race?

2. Were the ancestors of the Pygmies also the ancestors of the larger men?

3. Are the Pygmies an unchanged race from their creation, or from their appearance as human beings on the globe?

It is to be remarked that so many correlative issues in questions which have been the subject of the fiercest debate are here raised, that only a résumé of the leading arguments in each hypothesis can be given.

The principal points in favor of the hypothesis of degeneracy are these: the clearly established fact of degeneracy as influential in modifying animals; the long ages in which this deteriorating history has certainly had time to act in the case of Pygmies—history records their existence for five thousand years, and the extreme probability points to a much longer period; the fact that the widespread occurrence of the dwarf races over the globe points to migration rather than to separate spontaneous evolution; and, stronger than any other point, the anatomical completeness of the Pygmy's

body shows near kinship to all the races of man. If the dwarfs were undeveloped men, not yet come to the full stature of manhood, this fact would probably appear in some incompleteness in their anatomic structure.

The considerations in favor of the Pygmy as the primeval man from whose ancestors the larger races were developed are the usual arguments for the evolution of man from lower to higher types, and are too well known for extended discussion here. The anatomic completeness of the Pygmy applies as strongly to this hypothesis as to that of degeneracy. It may be remarked that if the ancestors of the Pygmies also fathered the larger races, then there ought to appear among the Pygmies of to-day some cases of progressive development in that direction. As a matter of fact, I did not observe any case of this, nor have I found any recorded. The strongest argument for this hypothesis is, that everywhere the Pygmies have been found they seem to have chosen the outer frontier of the lands occupied by the stronger peoples. This looks as if the latter drove the former toward the extremities of the world from a country in which all were originally together.

The last hypothesis, that the Pygmies present a case of unmodified structure from the beginning, is supported by the usual arguments which are brought against both evolution and degeneracy. It is true that these little people have apparently preserved an unchanged physical entity for five thousand years. But that only carries the question back into the debated ground of the origin of species.

The point at issue is distinct. Did the Pygmies come from a man who was a common ancestor to many races now as far removed from one another as my friend Teku of the Batwa village is from the late President McKinley? We must reserve the discussion of this question for another time. It is too profound and

comprehensive to be fully presented now. The juxtaposition of the Bantu and the Batwa in Africa affords one of the best specific cases for this study which has ever been brought before the scientific and philosophical world.

Of one fact my experience and observation completely convinced me, — that these Pygmies are human beings in every sense of the word. The data corroborating this opinion are physical, psychological, and ethnical.

The Pygmies, without exception, have all the parts, organs, and powers of the human body, without any variation in kind distinguishing them from other men. They lack nothing in this respect, nor are there any cases of atrophied members of the body. Their vocal organs enable them to make all the sounds necessary to speak the languages of the several different tribes which meet and mingle at Ndombe. The linguistic differences between these tribes are such as to justify the word language rather than dialect. The fact of there being no cases of marital alliance between the Pygmies and the other races is due to the attitude of the larger and not of the smaller men. There is a variation of at least one foot among the Pygmies themselves, and it is conceivable that the law of natural selection might develop a larger race from the selected members of the dwarfs. But there are no authenticated cases of this development on record as far as I have been able to discover.

The Pygmies show, in a greater or less degree, all the mental faculties which are characteristic of other men. The love of parents for their children is quite marked. The affectionate playfulness toward their dogs attracted my attention. The institution of marriage is recognized among them, and although polygamy prevails, there is the disapproval of laxity in these matters which one finds among the higher races. I have already referred to sun-worship as their chief religious principle. Murder, theft, and violence are

punished by common consent with varying severity in each case. The necessity of cunning rather than of force as a means of self-defense has affected their standard of truthfulness, but they know the difference between a lie and the truth, and have words to express both ideas. They show the play of the emotions of love, hatred, fear, self-respect, vanity, emulation, and, in fact, to a greater or less rudimentary degree, of all the passions and affections. The possession of rational powers by the Pygmies is beyond dispute. They can form a correct induction from facts, and can deduce conclusions from premises, and act constantly on axioms which are expressed pithily in their language. This reasoning faculty was what especially caught my attention, and caused me to prosecute a psychological study of them; with the result that I was fully convinced that they were men, and if the lowest type, still men.

The Pygmies are essentially gregarious in their habits. This is in sharp contrast with the practice of the highest apes, the gorillas, which go in pairs, each pair exhibiting unrelenting hostility to all others. The Pygmies are not naturally warlike in their attitude toward one another, and the wars in which they have been engaged have been principally in self-defense.

On one occasion the Pygmies showed their common sense in rather a decided way. In my employ were some very turbulent natives of the Zappo-Zap and Batetela tribes, whose headstrong disposition was a source of constant anxiety to me. They were so superior in industry and intelligence to all the other natives available as laborers that I could not conveniently dispense with their services. Their love of meat made them constant visitors to our Pygmy neighbors, and their taste for sharp bargains made the little people decidedly reluctant to deal with them. So one day the Pygmies mixed an emetic herb with the

meat the Zappo-Zaps insisted on buying at too low a figure, and put an end to the nuisance.

Once some black soldiers sent by the Belgian representative of the Congo government to collect taxes from Ndombe came upon the town, and poured into the Batwa village demanding meat. The little people gave them all they had on hand, and promised more on the morrow. When the soldiers came next morning, they were presented with an abundance of venison, which, fortunately for them, they first fed to some dogs as a precaution. The dogs died, and it was asserted by the soldiers that the Pygmies had prepared to poison them all. But for my own earnest intervention, there would have ensued a bloody fray at once. The soldiers contented themselves with feeding the meat to the Pygmies' dogs, and the little people wept sorely because I pronounced this fair play, and told them that they thus escaped lightly from worse punishment.

Although I made many efforts to impress the principles of Christianity upon the Batwa, they were very slow to comprehend or act upon them. They were extremely materialistic in their views of life, and preferred the sodium chloride of commerce to the salt of religion. One of them is now a member of the church in good and regular standing, according to my latest information, and I believe they have souls with light enough in them to see the way to their spiritual improvement and redemption.

In conclusion, it may afford a striking contrast to this description of the dwarfs, if I briefly allude to the principal characteristics of the giant king Ndombe and his family. Ndombe stood six feet six in stature, with broad square shoulders, Herculean limbs, and massive statuesque features of a distinctly Egyptian cast. He was of a bright copper color, with aquiline features, and magnificent brown eyes. He carried himself as erect as a life-guardsmen, and

although he weighed fully two hundred and fifty pounds, there was not a superfluous ounce of flesh on him. The *tout ensemble* of the man was regal, and I have never seen his physical superior.

He had thirty-one wives and over forty children. His family connections were so extensive that they occupied a whole town, and his personal bodyguard was composed entirely of his blood relations. Ndombe's character was kindly and his deportment dignified. As a rule, he treated his subjects with benevolence, and even his slaves were devoted to him. Toward me his attitude was always both friendly and deferential. The complete

confidence which his Pygmy subjects reposed in him was one of the strongest testimonies to his good sense and diplomatic ability.

The accessibility of these Pygmies to the outside world by reason of the recent opening up of the Kasai valley to steam navigation — a steamboat for Kasai river having been built in Richmond, Virginia — ought to lead to a thorough study of these little people. No subject can be of more fascinating interest, whether to the followers of science, or to any others who agree with Pope to the extent of believing that at least *one* "proper study of mankind is man."

Samuel Phillips Verner.

A NIGHT'S LODGING.

FATHER WILISTON was a retired clergyman, so distinguished from his son Timothy, whose house stood on the ridge north of the old village of Winthrop, and whose daily path lay between his house and the new growing settlement around the valley station. It occurred at odd times to Father Wiliston that Timothy's path was somewhat undeviating. The clergyman had walked widely since Winthrop was first left behind fifty-five years back, at a time when the town was smaller and cows cropped the Green but never a lawn mower.

After college and seminary had come the frontier, which lay this side of the Great Lakes until Clinton stretched his ribbon of waterway to the sea; then a mission in Wisconsin, intended to modify the restless profanity of lumbermen who broke legs under logs and drank disastrous whiskey. A city and twenty mills were on the spot now, though the same muddy river ran into the same blue lake. Some skidders and sawtenders of old days were come to live in stone mansions and drive in nickel-plated carriages; some were dead; some

drifting like the refuse on the lake front; some skidding and saw-tending still. Distinction of social position was an idea that Father Wiliston never was able to grasp.

In the memories of that raw city on the lake he had his place among its choicest incongruities; and when his threescore and ten years were full the practical tenderness of his nickel-plated and mansioned parishioners packed him one day into an upholstered sleeping car, drew an astonishing check to his credit, and mailed it for safety to Timothy Wiliston of Winthrop. So Father Wiliston returned to Winthrop, where Timothy, his son, had been sent to take root thirty years before.

One advantage of single-mindedness is that life keeps on presenting us with surprises. Father Wiliston occupied his own Arcadia, and Wisconsin or Winthrop merely sent in to him a succession of persons and events of curious interest. "The parson," — Wisconsin so spoke of him, leaning sociably over its bar, or pausing among scented slabs and sawdust, — "the parson resembles

an egg as respects that it's innocent and some lopsided, but when you think he must be getting addled, he ain't. He says to me, 'You'll make the Lord a deal of trouble, bless my soul!' he says. 'I don't see how the Lord's going to arrange for you. But' — thinking he might hurt my feelings — 'I guess he'll undertake it by and by.' Then he goes wabbling down-street, picks up Mick Riley, who's considerable drunk, and takes him to see his chickens. And Mick gets so interested in those chickens you'd like to die. Then parson goes off, absent-minded and forgets him, and Mick sleeps the balmy night in the barnyard, and steals a chicken in the morning, and parson says, 'Bless my soul! How singular!' Well," concluded Wisconsin, "he's getting pretty young for his years. I hear they're going to send him East before he learns bad habits."

The steadiness and repetition of Timothy's worldly career and semi-daily walk to and from his business therefore seemed to Father Wiliston phenomenal, a problem not to be solved by algebra, for if a equaled Timothy, b his house, c his business, $a + b + c$ was still not a far-reaching formula, and there seemed no advantage in squaring it. Geometrically it was evident that by walking back and forth over the same straight line you never so much as obtained an angle. Now, by arithmetic, "Four times thirty, multiplied by — leaving out Sundays — Bless me! How singular! Thirty-seven thousand five hundred and sixty times!"

He wondered if it had ever occurred to Timothy to walk it backward, or, perhaps, to hop, partly on one foot, and then, of course, partly on the other. Sixty years ago there was a method of progress known as "hop - skip - and - jump," which had variety and interest. Drawn in the train of this memory came other memories floating down the afternoon's slant sunbeams, rising from every meadow and clump of woods; from the

elder swamp where the brown rabbits used to run zigzag, possibly still ran in the same interesting way; from the great sand bank beyond the Indian graves. The old Wiliston house, with roof that sloped like a well-sweep, lay yonder, a mile or two. He seemed to remember some one said it was empty, but he could not associate it with emptiness. The bough apples there, if he remembered rightly, were an efficacious balm for regret.

He sighed and took up his book. It was another cure of regret, a Scott novel, *The Pirate*. It had points of superiority over Cruden's *Concordance*. The surf began to beat on the Shetland Islands, and trouble was imminent between Cleveland and Mordaunt Mer-toun.

Timothy and his wife drove away visiting that afternoon, not to return till late at night, and Bettina, the Scandinavian, laid Father Wiliston's supper by the open window, where he could look out across the porch and see the chickens clucking in the road.

"You mus' eat, fater," she commanded.

"Yes, yes, Bettina. Thank you, my dear. Quite right."

He came with his book and sat down at the table, but Bettina was experienced and not satisfied.

"You mus' eat firs'."

He sighed and laid down *The Pirate*. Bettina captured and carried it to the other end of the room, lit the lamp though it was still light, and departed after the mail. It was a rare opportunity for her to linger in the company of one of her Scandinavian admirers. "Fater" would not know the difference between seven, and nine or ten.

He leaned in the window and watched her safely out of sight, then went across the room, recaptured *The Pirate*, and chuckled in the tickling pleasure of a forbidden thing, "asked the blessing," drank his tea shrewdly, knowing it would deteriorate, and settled to his

book. The brown soft dusk settled, shade by shade; moths fluttered around the lamp; sleepy birds twittered in the maples. But the beat of the surf on the Shetland Islands was closer than these. Cleveland and Mordaunt Mer-toun were busy, and Norna, — "Really, Norna was a remarkable woman," — and an hour slipped past.

Some one hemmed close by and scraped his feet. It was a large man who stood there, dusty and ragged, one boot on the porch, with a red handkerchief knotted under his thick tangled beard and jovial red face. He had solid limbs and shoulders, and a stomach of sloth and heavy feeding.

The stranger did not resemble the comely pirate, Cleveland; his linen was not "seventeen hun'ed;" it seemed doubtful if there were any linen. And yet, in a way there was something not inappropriate about him, a certain chaotic ease; not piratical, perhaps, although he looked like an adventurous person. Father Wiliston took time to pass from one conception of things to another. He gazed mildly through his glasses.

"I ain't had no supper," began the stranger in a deep moaning bass; and Father Wiliston started.

"Bless my soul! Neither have I." He shook out his napkin. "Bettina, you see" —

"Looks like there 's enough for two," moaned and grumbled the other. He mounted the porch and approached the window, so that the lamplight glimmered against his big, red, oily face.

"Why, so there is!" cried Father Wiliston, looking about the table in surprise. "I never could eat all that. Come in." And the stranger rolled muttering and wheezing around through the door.

"Will you not bring a chair? And you might use the bread knife. These are fried eggs. And a little cold chicken? Really, I 'm very glad you dropped in, Mr." —

"Del Toboso." By this time the stranger's mouth was full and his enunciation confused.

"Why," — Father Wiliston helped himself to an egg, — "I don't think I caught the name."

"Del Toboso. Boozy 's what they calls me in the push."

"I 'm afraid your tea is quite cold. Boozy? How singular! I hope it does n't imply alcoholic habits."

"No," shaking his head gravely, so that his beard wagged to the judicial negation. "Takes so much to tank me up I can't afford it, let alone it ain't moral."

The two ate with haste, the stranger from habit and experience, Father Wiliston for fear of Bettina's sudden return. When the last egg and slice of bread had disappeared, the stranger sat back with a wheezing sigh.

"I wonder," began Father Wiliston mildly, "Mr. Toboso — Toboso is the last name, is n't it, and Del the first?"

"Ah," the other wheezed mysteriously, "I don't know about that, Elder. That 's always a question."

"You don't know! You don't know!"

"Got it off'n another man," went on Toboso sociably. "He said he would n't take fifty dollars for it. I did n't have no money nor him either, and he rolled off'n the top of the train that night or maybe the next. I don't know. I did n't roll him. It was in Dakota, over a cañon with no special bottom. He scattered himself on the way down. But I says, if that name 's worth fifty dollars, it 's mine. Del Toboso. That 's mine. Sounds valuable, don't it?"

Father Wiliston fell into a reverie. "Toboso? Why, yes. Dulcinea del Toboso. I remember, now."

"What 's that? Dulcinea, was it? And you knowed him?"

"A long while ago when I was younger. It was in a green cover Don Quixote — he was in a cage, 'The

Knight of the Rueful Countenance.' He had his face between the bars."

"Well," said Toboso, "you must have known him. He always looked glum, and I've seen him in quad myself."

"Yes. Sancho Panza. Dulcinea del Toboso."

"I never knowed that part of it. Dulcinea del Toboso! Well, that's me. You know a ruck of fine names, Elder. It sounds like thirteen trumps, now, don't it?"

Father Wiliston roused himself, and discriminated. "But you look more like Sancho Panza."

"Do? Well, I never knowed that one. Must've been a Greaser. Dulcinea's good enough."

Father Wiliston began to feel singularly happy and alive. The regular and even paced Timothy, his fidgeting wife, and the imperious Bettina were to some extent shadows and troubles in the evening of his life. They were careful people, who were hemmed in and restricted, who somehow hemmed in and restricted him. They lived up to precedents. Toboso did not seem to depend on precedents. He had the free speech, the casual inconsequence, the primitive mystery, desired of the boy's will and the wind's will, and traveled after by the long thoughts of youth. He was wind-beaten, burned red by the sun, ragged of coat and beard, huge, fat, wallowing in the ease of his flesh. One looked at him and remembered the wide world full of crossed trails and slumbering swamps.

Father Wiliston had long, straight white hair, falling beside his pale-veined and spiritual forehead and thin cheeks. He propped his forehead on one bony hand, and looked at Toboso with eyes of speculation. If both men were what some would call eccentric, to each other they seemed only companionable, which, after all, is the main thing.

"I have thought of late," continued

Father Wiliston after a pause, "that I should like to travel, to examine human life, say, on the highway. I should think, now, your manner of living most interesting. You go from house to house, do you not?—from city to city? Like Ulysses, you see men and their labors, and you pass on. Like the Apostles, — who surely were wise men, besides that were especially maintained of God, — like them, and the pilgrims to shrines, you go with wallet and staff or merely with Faith for your baggage."

"There don't nothing bother you in warm weather, that's right," said Toboso, "except your grub. And that ain't any more than's interesting. If it wasn't for looking after meals a man on the road might get right down lazy."

"Why, just so! How wonderful! Now, do you suppose, Mr. Toboso, do you suppose it feasible? I should very much like, if it could be equably arranged, I should very much like to have this experience."

Toboso reflected. "There ain't many of your age on the road." An idea struck him suddenly. "But supposing you were going sort of experimenting, like that, — and there's some folks that do, — supposing you could lay your hands on a little bunch of money for luck, I don't see nothing to stop."

"Why, I think there is some in my desk."

Toboso leaned forward and pulled his beard. The table creaked under his elbow.

"How much?"

"I will see. Of course you are quite right."

"At your age, Elder."

"It is not as if I were younger."

Father Wiliston rose and hurried out.

Toboso sat still and blinked at the lamp. "My Gord!" he murmured and moaned confidentially, "here's a game!"

After some time Father Wiliston re-

turned. "Do you think we could start now?" he asked eagerly.

"Why sure, Elder. What's hindering?"

"I am fortunate to find sixty dollars. Really, I didn't remember. And here's a note I have written to my son to explain. I wonder what Bettina did with my hat."

He hurried back into the hall. Toboso took the note from the table and pocketed it. "Ain't no use taking risks."

They went out into the warm night, under pleasant stars, and along the road together arm in arm.

"I feel pretty gay, Elder." He broke into bellowing-song, "Hey, Jinny! Ho, Jinny! Listen, love, to me."

"Really, I feel cheerful, too, Mr. Toboso, wonderfully cheerful."

"Dulcinea, Elder. Dulcinea's my name. Hey, Jinny! Ho, Jinny!"

"How singular it is! I feel very cheerful. I think—really, I think I should like to learn that song about Jinny. It seems such a cheerful song."

"Hit her up, Elder," wheezed Toboso jovially. "Now then"—

"Hey, Jinny! Ho, Jinny! Listen, love, to me."

So they went arm in arm with a roaring and a tremulous piping.

The lamp flickered by the open window as the night breeze rose. Bettina came home betimes and cleared the table. The memory of a Scandinavian caress was too recent to leave room for her to remark that there were signs of devastating appetite, that dishes had been used unaccountably, and that "Father" had gone somewhat early to bed. Timothy and his wife returned late. All windows and doors in the house of Timothy were closed, and the last lamp was extinguished.

Father Wiliston and Toboso went down the hill, silently, with furtive, lawless steps through the cluster of houses in the hollow, called Ironville,

and followed then the road up the chattering hidden brook. The road came from the shadows of this gorge at last to meadows and wide glimmering skies, and joined the highway to Redfield. Presently they came to where a grassy side road slipped into the highway from the right, out of a land of bush and swamp and small forest trees of twenty or thirty years' growth. A large chestnut stood at the corner.

"Hey, Jinny!" wheezed Toboso. "Let's look at that tree, Elder."

"Look at it? Yes, yes. What for?"

Toboso examined the bark by the dim starlight; Father Wiliston peered anxiously through his glasses to where Toboso's finger pointed.

"See those marks?"

"I'm afraid I don't. Really, I'm sorry."

"Feel 'em, then."

And Father Wiliston felt, with eager, excited finger.

"Them there mean there's lodging out here; empty house, likely."

"Do they, indeed. Very singular! Most interesting!" And they turned into the grassy road. The brushwood in places had grown close to it, though it seemed to be still used as a cart path. They came to a swamp, rank with mouldering vegetation, then to rising ground where once had been meadows, pastures, and plough lands.

Father Wiliston was aware of vaguely stirring memories. Four vast and aged maple trees stood close by the road, and their leaves whispered to the night; behind them, darkly, was a house with a far sloping roof in the rear. The windows were all glassless, all dark and dead-looking, except two in a front room, in which a wavering light from somewhere within trembled and cowered. They crept up, and looking through saw tattered wall paper and cracked plaster, and two men sitting on the floor, playing cards in the ghostly light of a fire of boards in the huge fireplace.

"Hey, Jinny!" roared Toboso, and the two jumped up with startled oaths. "Why, it's Boston Alley and the Newark Kid!" cried Toboso. "Come on, Elder."

The younger man cast forth zigzag flashes of blasphemy. "You big fat fool! Don't know no mor' 'n to jump like that on *me*! Holy Jims! I ain't made of copper."

Toboso led Father Wiliston round by the open door. "Hold your face, Kid. Gents, this here's a friend of mine we'll call the Elder, and let that go. I'm backing him, and I hold that goes. The Kid," he went on descriptively, addressing Father Wiliston, "is what you see afore you, Elder. His mouth is hot, his hands is cold, his nerves is shaky, he's always feeling the cops gripping his shirt-collar. He did n't see no clergy around. He begs your pardon. Don't he? I says, don't he?"

He laid a heavy red hand on the Newark Kid's shoulder, who wiped his pallid mouth with the back of his hand, smiled, and nodded.

Boston Alley seemed in his way an agreeable man. He was tall and slender limbed, with a long, thin black mustache, sinewy neck and hollow chest, and spoke gently with a sweet, resonant voice, saying, "Glad to see you, Elder."

These two wore better clothes than Toboso, but he seemed to dominate them with his red health and windy voice, his stomach and feet, and solidity of standing on the earth.

Father Wiliston stood the while gazing vaguely through his spectacles. The sense of happy freedom and congenial companionship that had been with him during the starlit walk had given way gradually to a stream of confused memories, and now these memories stood ranged about, looking at him with sad, faded eyes, asking him to explain the scene. The language of the Newark Kid had gone by him like a white hot

blast. The past and present seemed to have about the same proportions of vision and reality. He could not explain them to each other. He looked up to Toboso, pathetically, trusting in his help.

"It was my house."

Toboso stared surprised. "I ain't on to you, Elder."

"I was born here."

Indeed Toboso was a tower of strength even against the ghosts of other days, reproachful for their long duration in oblivion.

"Oh! Well, by Jinny! I reckon you'll give us lodging, Elder," he puffed cheerfully. He took the coincidence so pleasantly and naturally that Father Wiliston was comforted, and thought that after all it was pleasant and natural enough.

The only furniture in the room was a high-backed settle and an overturned kitchen table, with one leg gone, and the other three helplessly in the air, — so it had lain possibly many years. Boston Alley drew forward the settle and threw more broken clapboards on the fire, which blazed up and filled the room with flickering cheer. Soon the three outcasts were smoking their pipes and the conversation became animated.

"When I was a boy," said Father Wiliston, — "I remember so distinctly, — there were remarkable early bough apples growing in the orchard."

"The pot's yours, Elder," thundered Toboso. They went out groping under the old apple trees, and returned laden with plump pale green fruit. Boston Alley and the Newark Kid stretched themselves on the floor on heaps of pulled grass. Toboso and Father Wiliston sat on the settle. The juice of the bough apples ran with a sweet tang. The palate rejoiced and the soul responded. The Newark Kid did swift, cunning card tricks that filled Father Wiliston with wonder and pleasure.

"My dear young man, I don't see how you do it!"

The Kid was lately out of prison from a two years' sentence, "only for getting into a house by the window instead of the door," as Boston Alley delicately explained, and the "flies," meaning officers of the law, "are after him again for reasons he ain't quite sure of." The pallor of slum birth and breeding, and the additional prison pallor, made his skin look curious where the grime had not darkened it. He had a short-jawed, smooth-shaven face, a flat mouth and light hair, and was short and stocky, but lithe and noiseless in movement, and inclined to say little. Boston Alley was a man of some slight education, who now sometimes sung in winter variety shows such songs as he picked up here and there in summer wanderings, for in warm weather he liked footing the road better, partly because the green country sights were pleasant to him, and partly because he was irresolute and keeping engagements was a distress. He seemed agreeable and sympathetic.

"He ain't got no more real feelings 'n a fish," said Toboso, gazing candidly at Boston, but speaking to Father Wiliston, "and yet he looks like he had 'em, and a man 's glad to see him. Ain't seen you since fall, Boston, but I see the Kid last week at a hang-out in Albany. Well, gents, this ain't a bad lay."

Toboso himself had been many years on the road. He was in a way a man of much force and decision, and probably it was another element in him, craving sloth and easy feeding, which kept him in this submerged society; although here, too, there seemed room for the exercise of his dominance. He leaned back in the settle, and had his hand on Father Wiliston's shoulder. His face gleamed redly over his bison beard.

"It's a good lay. And we're gay, Elder. Ain't we gay? Hey, Jinny!"

"Yes, yes, Toboso. But this young man, — I'm sure he must have great talents, great talents, quite remarkable. Ah — yes, Jinny!"

"Hey, Jinny," they sang together, "Ho, Jinny! Listen, love, to me. I'll sing to you, and play to you, a dulcet melode-e-e," — while Boston danced a shuffle and the Kid snapped the cards in time. Then, at Toboso's invitation and command, Boston sang a song, called *The Cheerful Man*, resembling a ballad, to a somewhat monotonous tune, and perhaps known in the music halls of the time, — all with a sweet, resonant voice and a certain pathos of intonation: —

"I knew a man across this land
Came waving of a cheerful hand,
Who drew a gun and gave some one
A violent contus-i-on,
This cheerful man.

"They sent him up, he fled from 'quad'
By a window and the grace of God,
Picked up a wife and children six,
And wandered into politics,
This cheerful man.

"In politics he was, I hear,
A secret, subtle financier —
So the jury says, 'But we agree
He quits this sad community,
This cheerful man.'

"His wife and six went on the town,
And he went off; without a frown
Reproaching Providence, went he
And got another wife and three,
This cheerful man.

"He runs a cross-town car to-day
From Bleecker Street to Avenue A.
He swipes the fares with skillful ease,
Keeps up his hope, and tries to please,
This cheerful man.

"Our life is mingled woe and bliss,
Man that is born of woman is
Short-lived and goes to his long home.
Take heart, and learn a lesson from
This cheerful man."

"But," said Father Wiliston, "don't you think really, Mr. Alley, that the moral is a little confused? I don't mean intentionally," he added, with anxious precaution, "but don't you think he should have reflected" —

"You're right, Elder," said Toboso,

with decision. "It's like that. It ain't moral. When a thing ain't moral that settles it." And Boston nodded and looked sympathetic with every one.

"I was sure you would agree with me," said Father Wiliston. He felt himself growing weary now and heavy-eyed. Presently somehow he was leaning on Toboso with his head on his shoulder. Toboso's arm was around him, and Toboso began to hum in a kind of wheezing lullaby, "Hey, Jinny! Ho, Jinny!"

"I am very grateful, my dear friends," murmured Father Wiliston. "I have lived a long time. I fear I have not always been careful in my course, and am often forgetful. I think," — drowsily, — "I think that happiness must in itself be pleasing to God. I was often happy before in this room. I remember — my dear mother sat here — who is now dead. We have been quite, really quite cheerful to-night. My mother — was very judicious — an excellent wise woman — she died long ago." So he was asleep, before any one was aware, while Toboso crooned huskily, "Hey, Jinny!" and Boston Alley and the Newark Kid sat upright and stared curiously.

"Holy Jims!" said the Kid.

Toboso motioned them to bring the pulled grass. They piled it on the settle, let Father Wiliston down softly, brought the broken table, and placed it so that he could not roll off.

"Well," said Toboso, after a moment's silence, "I guess we'd better pick him and be off. He's got sixty in his pocket."

"Oh," said Boston, "that's it, is it?"

"It's my find, but seeing you's here I takes half and give you fifteen apiece."

"Well, that's right."

"And I guess the Kid can take it out."

The Kid found the pocketbook with

sensitive gliding fingers, and pulled it out. Toboso counted and divided the bills.

"Well," whispered Toboso thoughtfully, "if the Elder now was forty years younger, I would n't want a better pardner." They tiptoed out into the night. "But," he continued, "looking at it that way, o' course he ain't got no great use for his wad and won't remember it till next week. Heeled all right, anyhow. Only, I says now, I says, there ain't no vice in him."

"Mammy tuck me up, no licks to-night," said the Kid, plodding in front. "I ain't got nothing against him."

Boston Alley only fingered the bills in his pocket.

It grew quite dark in the room they had left, as the fire sunk to a few flames, then to dull embers and an occasional darting spark. The only sound was Father Wiliston's light breathing.

When he awoke the morning was dim in the windows. He lay a moment confused in mind, then sat up and looked around.

"Dear me! Well, well, I dare say Toboso thought I was too old. I dare say" — getting on his feet — "I dare say they thought it would be unkind to tell me so."

He wandered through the dusky old rooms and up and down the creaking stairs, picking up bits of recollection, some vivid, some more dim than the dawn, some full of laughter, some that were leaden and sad; then out into the orchard to find a bough apple in the dewy grasses, and, kneeling under the gnarled old tree to make his morning prayer, which included in petition the three overnight revelers, he went in fluent phrase and broken tones among eldest memories.

He pushed cheerfully into the grassy road now, munching his apple and humming, "Hey, Jinny! Ho, Jinny!" He examined the tree at the highway with fresh interest. "How singular! It

means an empty house. Very intelligent man, Toboso."

Bits of grass were stuck on his back and a bramble dragged from his coat tail. He plodded along in the dust and wobbled absent-mindedly from one side of the road to the other. The dawn towered behind him in purple and crimson, lifted its robe and canopy, and flung some kind of glittering gauze far beyond him. He did not notice it till he reached the top of the hill above Ironville with Timothy's house in sight. Then he stopped, turned, and was startled a moment; then smiled companionably on the state and glory of the morning, much as on Toboso and the card tricks of the Newark Kid.

"Really," he murmured, "I have had a very good time."

He met Timothy in the hall.

"Been out to walk early, father? Wait — there's grass and sticks on your coat."

It suddenly seemed difficult to explain the entire circumstances to Timothy, a settled man and girt with precedent.

"Did you enjoy it? — Letter you dropped? No, I have n't seen it. Breakfast is ready."

Neither Bettina nor Mrs. Timothy had seen the letter.

"No matter, my dear, no matter. I — really, I've had a very good time."

Afterward he came out on the porch with his Bible and Concordance, sat down and heard Bettina brushing his hat and ejaculating, "Fater!" Presently he began to nod drowsily and his head dropped low over the Concordance. The chickens clucked drowsily in the road.

Arthur Colton.

THE BROWNING TONIC.

I.

THERE was once a time — not so long ago, either, as I would like to induce credulous people to believe — when the three editions of Robert Browning's poems which now find home and welcome in my bookcases would, had I possessed them, have been sealed books to me.

In those days — already so inconceivable that they seem to recede into a prehistoric vista — it was commonly supposed by readers in my rank and station of enlightenment that a person who made any assured claim to a comprehension of Browning was either a rank pretender or the victim of a special revelation. It was during this period, I remember, that a teacher of English in the public schools said to me rather sadly, —

"I don't like to tell people that I

enjoy reading Browning — it makes me appear so conceited."

Even in that dark era of my existence, however, I did not consider myself so ignorant of the work of the great poet as my present confession seems to imply. I was more or less familiar with *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, I had heard the story of the good news that was brought from Ghent to Aix vigorously thundered forth on various declamatory occasions, and I had read with emotion that Incident of the French Camp which Owen Wister makes his Virginian hero criticise so cruelly. I should not say, if I were going to state my conception of the situation, that I had been growing up through gradations of Longfellow, Lowell, Tennyson, and the rest to the possibility of a comprehension of Browning. The library with which I was most familiar in my youth offered to a child naturally hungry for

poetry a noble collection of English authors. Fed from this source I devoured Shakespeare with the avidity which one saves nowadays for the perusal of a popular novel, pored over *Paradise Lost* with the conviction that it was rather sensational reading, laid my head upon the lap of earth with Gray, and spouted Collins's Odes to hill and sky in my lonely walks.

This was princely fare, and I ought to have benefited by it far more than I did, yet, in spite of my limitations, I assimilated something from it all, something that became a part of me, imperishable until I perish. From such a foundation, however ill profited by, one does not "grow up" to other authors — one simply enlarges one's Olympian temple to make room for new gods,

"A hundred shapes of lucid stone!
All day we built its shrine for each."

A man asked me once if I had not outgrown Dickens, and I questioned my inner consciousness to know if this were the case. Through long familiarity I had, indeed, ceased to read Dickens, but — outgrown? Does one outgrow Mr. Micawber, Betsey Trotwood, Mr. Pickwick, and the rest? Is it not rather that one enlarges the circle of one's friends to find room for them all, every one, the old no less than the new? Sometimes, too, the high gods prove too high, or the son of the carpenter is transformed before our eyes into the King of Men.

Lucian's parable of the council of the gods and the struggle for precedence is applicable still. The dog-faced monster from Egypt with the great gold nose is, it is true, sooner or later relegated to the background when one learns to estimate comparative values, but he is not banished to outer darkness. All our gods come to stay — and a gold nose counts for something.

I can remember the exact moment when Robert Browning was first defi-

nately revealed to me as a presiding deity.

I have always had a tendency to grasp at the pictorial aspect of things, and, as it chanced, each of the group of poems which first revealed that poet to me as the friendliest friend of all is pigeon-holed in my mind with a spectacular tag attached to it.

Thus I entered the Browning country — the real land of faery where Browning is king — through the gate of Prospice, and the gate was opened to me by a young man. He stood, I remember, while he read the poem aloud, and a slant of sunlight fell full upon his broad brows and his rather nice gray eyes, and even lent a glamour to the exceedingly pointed toes of his patent leather shoes. He liked what he read, and was in earnest about it; he was not thinking of me and I very soon ceased thinking of him.

The peculiar movement of the poem appealed directly to an element always easily aroused in my nature, — the fighting spirit, which may be in my case more bravado than pluck, but which at any rate knows how to appreciate pluck in others.

"I was ever a fighter, so — one fight more

The best and the last!"

struck a chord that went thrilling on until the quick transition at the end of the poem, when

"the element's rage, the fiend voices that
rave,"

dwindle and blend and change, to become

"first a peace out of pain,

Then a light, then thy breast,

O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee
again,

And with God be the rest!"

There is no touch to which the hearts of men and women so readily thrill with instant response as to this touch of human love, whether it be that of the fighter leaning across the black gulf of death to clasp the beloved one again, or

the Blessed Damozel stooping from
"the gold bar of heaven" to say,

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come."

Every one of us, even those who have deliberately taken husbands or wives in a series, cherishes in his or her inmost thought the conviction that under different and more favorable circumstances we, too, might have been capable of romantic love and perfect constancy. This unformulated belief in ourselves aids our self-respect immensely, and helps to put a garland — invisible perhaps, but to the eye of faith none the less decorative — around the least sentimental existence.

The motive of the whole poem, too, the courage, the constancy, the devotion, strikes with a bold hand — as Browning always does strike — that keynote of strength which is the dominant note in everything he writes. Weakness is the only thing he conceived it possible to fear. Be bold, act a man's part and leave the rest, — above all, remember that fighting is the best fun in the world, and a man who won't fight is not worth his salt.

"Let a man contend to the uttermost
For his life's set prize, be it what it will!"

My next discovery in the Browning country was Rabbi Ben Ezra, a mine of pure gold from which I have been digging nuggets ever since. The personal recollection to which my earlier knowledge of this poem is joined is that of a clergyman with whom I conned it over stanza by stanza, for the purpose, as I recall it, of convincing him that Browning had written some things which compared favorably with the work of his favorite Tennyson and were not materially harder to understand.

I told him, with that modest confidence in my literary judgments which has always distinguished me, that Tennyson never but once mustered sufficient courage really to "let himself go," and that Maud, which was the outcome of this first and last indulgence, has a hys-

teric note in it which would have been impossible to Browning.

"One feels all the time," I criticised confidently, "that the

'dreadful hollow behind the little wood'

was a great deal more dreadful than it need have been if the hero of the poem could only have 'braced up' and fulfilled his own longings,

'And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be!'

My clerical friend, however, did not believe in any man's right to let himself go, and our sitting ended with a hopeless discrepancy between the lay and the ministerial judgment.

I have read this poem many times since then and never without finding in it something strong and stirring, something that gave me fresh courage to be gone

"Once more on my adventure brave and
new."

In many a night of weariness and racking pain I have repeated over and over to myself — that inner self that has power over the physical being — fragments from its battle call, — the bugle call to my retreating courage: —

"Then welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never
grudge the throe!"

It is true, I never did welcome each rebuff, and there was no moment, I suppose, when I would not joyfully have turned earth's roughness smooth, but since I must endure the throe whether I grudged it or not, here was something to take hold of, to crystallize around, to serve as a sting to my spiritual weakness.

If, of all our authors, we are most indebted to him who helps us to hate cowardice, then Robert Browning must

be hailed above all others as the prophet of courage, courage in victory, courage in defeat, the courage of the losing fight no less than the courage of success. One, he was,

“who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,

Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted,
wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.”

I have never asked, it is true, whether in detail he lived up to what he preached. It does not matter. Most of us are in one way or another born cowards, and what we need more than anything else is to be made properly ashamed of ourselves. Hail, then, Robert Browning, disturber of the peace!

While I was still in the grasp of Rabbi Ben Ezra, I was invited to spend an afternoon with a “Reading Circle,” which was at that time struggling with the dark mysteries of Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came.

They told me sadly — the members of the Circle — that they had pored over a dozen interpretations of the poem and “did n’t understand it yet.”

“Of course I would like to understand what Browning meant by the thing,” one reader said candidly, — “that is, if he himself had any idea ‘where he was at,’ — but I don’t see how anybody could *like* it.”

Having had my attention thus called to Childe Roland, I made a bold charge at his secrets, but very soon made up my mind that I was not under the slightest obligation to understand him. I have trodden that dark way with him many a time, have lost myself upon the barren plain, felt what he felt, looked with despairing eyes on what he saw, and when

“Burning it came on me all at once
This was the place,”

I have always been sure that, after going through so much disagreeableness

for the sake of arriving at the Dark Tower, only to find “all the lost adventurers, my peers,” on dress parade watching to see what I was going to do about it, I should have blown the horn at all hazards. As I have previously hinted, Browning’s chief virtue is that he makes one feel willing to blow horns and wave banners and lead forlorn hopes.

It was at about this period of my Browning explorations that I began to meet the Greek professor in my morning walks. The springtime had come and the voice of the turtle was heard in the land, — a condition of affairs which made it more possible for the human voice to gain an audience. The Greek professor — who had retired from the active duties of his position — now and then joined company with me during our leisurely return from the morning errands which gave us an excuse for being abroad. He had a genuine passion for the classics, and enjoyed rolling out sonorous quotations from his favorite authors, although these gems of thought always required translation into English for the instruction of my ignorance.

One day he asked me rather mournfully if I liked Browning. I acknowledged with cheerful hope that I thought I was going to like him, though I had not yet penetrated very far into the labyrinth of his pages.

It appeared from the professor’s narrative that an enthusiastic young friend “who in the inexperience of youth doubtless flattered himself that he could comprehend all mysteries” had requested him, the professor, to read Caliban upon Setebos — oh, the drawling scorn of accent with which this was spoken! and he was in process of offering this sacrifice to friendship.

“If you have n’t read the gibberish,” he suggested, “and have time to waste, as most women do have, I wish you would see whether you can make head or tail of it. I can’t.”

The next time we met I told the professor that I had ventured on Caliban and rather enjoyed the experiment. I spoke more diffidently than is my wont. I am generally most positive in regard to subjects I know least about.

"Enjoyed it!" the professor exclaimed. "Will you tell me what there is to enjoy about Caliban upon Setebos?" — the old scornful intonation.

"Well," I replied, "the same element that appeals to me in all the Browning poems I know, — the daring of it, the boldness with which he puts his finger on the sore spots so many of us are conscious of and think it wicked to mention."

"Pooh!" my friend repeated, "Caliban upon Setebos! My dear woman, there's nothing in it — less than nothing! Now here's a little bit that I got from my Greek Calendar this morning — an epitaph by Leonidas. See what you think of this," and the professor translated for me,

"A slave was Epictetus, who before you buried lies,
And a cripple and a beggar and the favorite
of the skies."

"I like it," I answered, "partly, I think, because it shows the same spirit that draws me toward Browning."

"The only difference I recognize between the two," the professor remarked in his very softest drawl, "is the difference between words with meaning — much in little — and words without meaning — little in much."

I no longer meet the professor in my morning walks. He heard one day "the great voice" from those skies

"Where Zeus upon the purple waits,"

and calling last Ave atque Vale! to those he left behind, he went his way. It may be that in that high Olympus he talks to-day with "Euripides the human" and Catullus the beloved and Browning the brave, and there has learned to know as he is known.

From Caliban upon Setebos I passed

by an easy transition to Paracelsus. This transformation scene was owing to the prophetic guidance of the Woman's Literary Club. The "programme committee" of this organization, knowing well where Genius had her home, had invited me to "prepare a paper" on the latter poem. I did not hesitate for a moment. I had once glanced hastily through the poem, and, being hampered by very little knowledge of its real import, in three days from the time of request I had delivered myself of an interpretation which solved satisfactorily — to my thinking — every vexed problem that the critics had ever raised in regard to its meaning.

I did not hesitate to assert in the most "flat-footed" manner, "Whatever charge of obscurity can be brought against other of Browning's poems, there is nothing obscure in Paracelsus!"

It was a great paper. I liked the exordium of it: —

"It is characteristic of the power and the outreach of Browning's genius that it almost seemed as if he had nothing to learn from life. In Paracelsus, written by a stripling hardly past the age of boyhood, a young man standing at the threshold of his years, joyous with an Italian affluence of temperament, having never known the deep experiences, the struggles that are birth pangs of the soul, the disenchantments and failures of life, he paints the dream, the yearning, the bitter comedy, and the tragedy of the human drama as if his genius could foresee the end from the beginning, or as if he had already reached the vantage point of that

'Last of life for which the first was made.'

I am not much addicted to reading papers in public, — I think, in fact, that I made my début and my final exit in that capacity on the occasion in question, — and I remember well that the electric light above my head shone with unexampled violence, and the faces of the audience advanced and receded like the

waves of the sea. There were tones in my voice, too, which were unrecognizable even to myself. When I had finished, a lady, who was then serving God and her native land by accepting the position of domestic in some needy household, took me kindly by the hand and told me that she liked my piece. Few of my audience seemed to realize that they were apathetically letting the opportunity of a lifetime slip by.

I have never been sorry for my audacity in writing that paper. I got from it for myself much that I did not know how to give to others, — the burden and message of Paracelsus, that strange, complex nature, trying at all the gates of life, striving to live a purely spiritual existence in a human world, forced to recognize one by one the physical and material barriers which made such a life impossible, hampered by the very strength of his own powers, and stooping at last to be bound by the restraints he despised, yet through strength and weakness alike,

"upward tending, all though weak,
Like plants in mines which never saw the sun,
But dream of him, and guess where he may be,
And do their best to climb and get to him."

It is the same dominant chord of courage. All the battle cries of all the ages are in it, and the confidence born of all the victories that have been.

A Browning notion of victory, however, does not with any necessity whatever imply the getting what one wants. It often means just keeping eternally at it, and realizing that surrender is the only defeat: —

"But what if I fail of my purpose here?
It is but to keep the nerves at strain,
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
And baffled, get up and begin again —
So the chase takes up one's life, that's all."

II.

I am as well aware as any one can be that my Browning explorations are

valuable to the world at large only as an indication of the ease with which one can grow rich.

As Captain Bunsby would say, "The bearings of this observation lies in the application on it."

If I who am but a woman, neither scholar nor critic, a shallow adventurer going at the quest in mere haphazard fashion, have been able to discover for myself the true elixir, the tonic which the twentieth century most needs, what wealth may not lie in the search for that dominant sex which habitually calls itself "the stronger," the sex of assured intellect and logical mind, and, to speak candidly, the sex that needs the tonic most.

I may be wrong, — and if so I am willing to acknowledge it to anybody who can convince me of my error, — but my observation goes to show that the average woman of to-day has more ideals than the average man and is therefore morally stronger. Moreover, no woman is ever allowed to suppose herself incapable of improvement. We belong to a sex that is continually being lessened and lectured. One never takes up a newspaper without finding in it some admonition in regard to what women should or should not do. On the other hand, while our daily reading furnishes much inconsistent criticism of individual men, the evidence seems to point to the fact that men in the concrete are very well satisfied with themselves as they are. One cannot help feeling that if the entire sex could be lined up, and the question propounded to them, "What's the matter with man?" the answer would be one universal roar of "He's all right!"

A woman, once convinced that she has a soul, can seldom be quite easy in ignoring it; a man feels sure that if he has one it is n't his fault, and therefore he feels himself relieved from too great responsibility. The twentieth-century man, however, is not indolent in any sense but an ethical one. Never was

there a time when more attention was paid to physical growth and culture, but a tonic whose efficacy must be assured by a more strenuous spiritual life does not especially commend itself to our athlete. He prefers ease of mind and malt extracts. He has "outworn" the old dogmas, seen the folly of ideals, and prefers to confine his attention to the things that really count. If there is another existence to follow this one, its philosophy is simple:—

"Our egress from the world
Will be nobody knows where,
But if we do well here
We shall do well there,"—

therefore, why bother one's self too much about a future which is, at best, problematic?

The human race has not altogether deteriorated. The twentieth-century man has in him all the heroic possibilities that any man ever had, but he is suffering from that weakening of fibre which necessarily accompanies a dearth of convictions.

The acquisition of wealth, which is the ruling motive of the America of our century, does not constitute an ideal, since an ideal implies some sort of moral earnestness. Materialism, however, is perfectly consistent with great benevolences, generosity without sacrifice and sympathy without abnegation. Indeed, in proportion as we lower the standard of that absolute strength which constitutes perfect manhood and womanhood, the more "kind-hearted" we grow, the more we deprecate anything which creates pain or demands endurance, the more we send flowers to criminals and sign petitions against the execution of murderers. We cry out against war and send delegates to Peace Congresses, not altogether because this course is "Christian,"—though that is how we usually define our feeling,—but partly, too, because, like the child in Helen's Babies, we object to the sight of anything "bluggy."

I do not know anything which better

illustrates the deterioration of fibre which is the result of an unstrenuous standard than the attitude of the American people—too large a proportion of them, at least—toward the Cuban War.

I was too young at the time of our civil conflict to pronounce with any accuracy upon the feeling of the public at large in regard to it, so perhaps I am wrong in imagining, as I always have done, that it was that of heroic acceptance and endurance, and that men and women alike felt that the best blood of a nation was not too great a price to pay to settle a moral issue forever and settle it aright.

Years after, when the bugles of war again sounded for a contest not our own,—a war of generosity to right the wrongs of another and alien people,—the response was just as ready, the deeds of heroism were no less conspicuous, and for a breathing space while the men of the country were shouting "Remember the Maine!" and the women were gathering in sewing circles for the manufacture of the flannel night clothing which no self-respecting soldier ever fails to assume before retiring to rest in the trenches, a thrill of the same unquestioning courage swept through the land.

Scarcely had the echo of the guns of Santiago died away, however, before the howl began,—the howl of the kind-hearted, the sympathetic, the unstrenuous generation.

What justification, they asked, has any Christian nation for going to war at all, especially in a quarrel not its own?

If, however, to suit his own purposes, President McKinley insisted upon war, why did he not select a country possessing a more temperate climate as the scene of battle?

If time had been given the soldiers to provide themselves with suitable outfits, could not this delay have been utilized by the government for the manu-

fracture of sandwiches in readiness for informal lunches to be served during charges and on the field of battle? Has not a toiling and much enduring soldier a right to expect such common, every-day recognition of his services as a hot dinner, prepared promptly, would represent? Is the "poor soldier" asking too much when he calls for clean linen and an opportunity to run up a laundry bill?

In short, the voice of the people suggested wisely, if we must have war, let us see that it is conducted regularly and in order, without bloodshed or confusion. Let physicians be provided to feel the military pulse daily and keep down all unnecessary fever in the veins.

Hence it happened that while we were taking all our newly acquired heroes down from their pedestals, and our army officers were quarreling over the division of glory, and mothers of volunteers were writing to the newspapers to complain that the tastes of their sons had never been consulted in regard to having oatmeal for breakfast, and committees of investigation were diligently smelling at all the army stores that remained unused, there were one or two more or less important facts that seemed to escape general cognizance.

It has, for instance, sometimes been apprehended that war is a grim game, not suited to holiday soldiers; but if the thing at stake is worth the price to be paid, the only decency is to pay it joyfully without doubt or hesitation, and having paid, never to repent. Repentance, in such a case, is cowardice.

I remember a certain little boy who came home from school with a black eye and a bleeding nose and a question in his young mind whether he should weep or swagger. Just as his mother's sympathy and first aid to the wounded were beginning to convulse his infant features his father appeared on the scene.

"Did you have any good reason for fighting?" he asked.

The budding warrior proclaimed a noble cause for battle.

"Did you lick the other fellow?"

The other fellow had ignominiously bitten the dust.

"Then," inquired the parent, "what are you whining over?"

Every grave on those Cuban hillsides marks a sacrifice for human progress, and when one remembers the failures, the futilities, the disgraces among living men, who can feel that he who in the moment of a supreme impulse offered all, and found his abnegation accepted, did not choose the better part?

"Life's business being just the terrible choice" betwixt strength and weakness.

It is a part of the materialism of modern life and the cowardly theory that life is worth to a man only "what he gets out of it as he goes along," that so many men spend their days in offering continual sacrifices to their bodies.

When the hero of the popular short story is not eating or drinking, he is smoking. His chronicler flavors his pages with tobacco smoke and punctuates them with cocktails. In joy or sorrow, in the most romantic no less than the most commonplace moments the hero "lights another cigarette." Emotion unaccompanied by nicotine is something of which he evidently has no conception.

It is the same, too, with the up to date young man in real life. He knows, if he has been properly trained, that while a toothpick should be indulged in only in that spot to which Scripture enjoins us to retire when we are about to pray, a meerschaum pipe is a perfectly well-bred article for public wear, and one which enables him to fulfill agreeably that law of his being which suggests that he should always be putting something in his mouth.

At a college ball game not long since where, as is usual on such occasions,

clouds of incense were rising to the heavens from the male portion of the spectators, I amused myself by observing a young man who sat in a carriage near me, and who while the game was in progress smoked a pipe three times and filled in all the intervals with cigars and cigarettes. I knew something about him, and had frequently heard him referred to as "a first-rate fellow," but if anybody had asked him if he believed himself capable of a single pure impulse of the soul entirely unmixed with bodily sensations he would have stared in amazement.

Rabbi Ben Ezra's test,

"Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone
way?"

would have struck this young man as a decidedly "fresh" inquiry. A certain pictorial advertisement which for a long time held a conspicuous place in the daily newspapers would, however, have appealed to him at once. It depicted a youth with a pipe in his mouth, holding his sweetheart on his knee, and rapturously exclaiming, as he diligently puffed the smoke into her face, "With you and a pipeful of Every Day Smoke I am perfectly happy!" Old Omar gives us a more poetic version of the same thing:—

"A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!"

I am not desirous in this essay of discussing the morality of any habit, as such; I simply wish to emphasize the fact that constant self-indulgence of any kind is incompatible with strength. The Browning tonic which I would like to substitute for the proprietary medicines of the age does not inspire any man to be an angel before his time,

— it only stimulates him to be a *man* and master of himself;

"A man for aye removed
From the developed brute; a God though in
the germ."

The tonic in question is not an expensive remedy except in the amount of effort required on the part of the patient to render it efficacious, but it is perhaps a little too bracing to be taken in large doses until the spirit of it has begun to steal into one's veins.

If, for instance, the young man of the ball game should begin before breakfast in the morning with

"What have I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the un-
manly?"

follow it up at about the time of his after-breakfast pipe with

"I count life just a stuff,
To try the soul's strength on,"

manfully swallow an afternoon dose of

"When the fight begins within himself
A man's worth something,"

and substitute for his usual nightcap,

"Why comes temptation but for man to meet,
And master and make crouch beneath his foot,
And so be pedestaled in triumph?"

he might at first find such a sudden influx of red blood into his veins a little more than his system could bear, but, in due time, if the prescription were persevered in, he might learn to welcome the joy and the strength of the new elixir of life.

"Don't you get a little weary of hearing life compared to a battlefield?" the athletic young man inquired when the rhetoric of these prescriptions was discussed in the family circle.

"Call it a football field, then," I retorted. "If you are going to play at all, one has a perfect right to expect you to get into the game."

Martha Baker Dunn.

LI WAN, THE FAIR.

"THE sun sinks, Canim, and the heat of the day is gone!"

So called Li Wan to the man whose head was hidden beneath the squirrel-skin robe, but she called softly, as though divided between the duty of waking him and the fear of him awake. For she was afraid of this big husband of hers, who was like unto none of the men she had known.

The moose meat sizzled uneasily, and she moved the frying-pan to one side of the red embers. As she did so she glanced warily at the two Hudson Bay dogs dripping eager slaver from their scarlet tongues and following her every movement. They were huge, hairy fellows, crouched to leeward in the thin smoke-wake of the fire to escape the swarming myriads of mosquitoes. As Li Wan gazed down the steep to where the Klondike flung its swollen flood between the hills, one of the dogs bellied its way forward like a worm, and with a deft, catlike stroke of the paw dipped a chunk of hot meat out of the pan to the ground. But Li Wan caught him out of the corner of her eye, and he sprang back with a snap and a snarl as she rapped him over the nose with a stick of firewood.

"Nay, Olo," she laughed, recovering the meat without removing her eye from him. "Thou art ever hungry, and for that thy nose leads thee into endless troubles."

But the mate of Olo joined him, and together they defied the woman. The hair on their backs and shoulders bristled in recurrent waves of anger, and the thin lips writhed and lifted into ugly wrinkles, exposing the flesh-tearing fangs, cruel and menacing. Their very noses serrulated and shook in brute passion, and they snarled as wolves snarl, with all the hatred and malignity of the breed impelling them to

spring upon the woman and drag her down.

"And thou, too, Bash, fierce as thy master and never at peace with the hand that feeds thee! This is not thy quarrel, so that be thine! and that!"

As she cried, she drove at them with the firewood, but they avoided the blows and refused to retreat. They separated and approached her from either side, crouching low and snarling. Li Wan had struggled with the wolf-dog for mastery from the time she toddled among the skin-bales of the tepee, and she knew a crisis was at hand. Bash had halted, his muscles stiff and tense for the spring; Olo was yet creeping into striking distance.

Grasping two blazing sticks by the charred ends, she faced the brutes. The one held back, but Bash sprang, and she met him in mid-air with the flaming weapon. There were sharp yelps of pain and swift odors of burning hair and flesh as he rolled in the dirt and the woman ground the fiery embers into his mouth. Snapping wildly, he flung himself sidelong out of her reach and in a frenzy of fear scrambled for safety. Olo, on the other side, had begun his retreat, when Li Wan reminded him of her primacy by hurling a heavy stick of wood into his ribs. Then the pair retreated under a rain of firewood, and on the edge of the camp fell to licking their wounds and whimpering and snarling by turns.

Li Wan blew the ashes off the meat and sat down again. Her heart had not gone up a beat, and the incident was already old, for this was the routine of life. Canim had not stirred during the disorder, but instead had set up a lusty snoring.

"Come, Canim!" she called. "The heat of the day is gone and the trail waits for our feet."

The squirrel-skin robe was agitated and cast aside by a brown arm. Then the man's eyelids fluttered and drooped again.

"His pack is heavy," she thought, "and he is tired with the work of the morning."

A mosquito stung her on the neck, and she daubed the unprotected spot with wet clay from a ball she had convenient to hand. All morning, toiling up the divide and enveloped in a cloud of the pests, the man and woman had plastered themselves with the sticky mud, which, drying in the sun, covered their faces with masks of clay. These masks, broken in divers places by the movement of the facial muscles, had constantly to be renewed, so that the deposit was irregular of depth and peculiar of aspect.

Li Wan shook Canim gently but with persistence till he roused and sat up. His first glance was to the sun, and after consulting the celestial timepiece he hunched over to the fire and fell to ravenously on the meat. He was a large Indian, fully six feet in height, deep-chested and heavy-muscled, and his eyes were keener and vested with greater intelligence than the average of his kind. The lines of will had marked his face deeply, and this, coupled with a sternness and primitiveness, advertised a native indomitability, unswerving of purpose and prone, when thwarted, to sullen cruelty.

"To-morrow, Li Wan, we shall feast." He sucked a marrow-bone clean and threw it to the dogs. "We shall have *flapjacks* fried in *bacon grease*, and *sugar*, which is more toothsome" —

"*Flapjacks*?" she cried, mouthing the word curiously.

"Ay," Canim answered with superiority; "and I shall teach you new ways of cookery. Of these things I speak, you are ignorant, and of many more things besides. You have lived your days in a little corner of the earth and know nothing. But I" — he

straightened himself and looked at her pridefully — "I am a great traveler, and have been all places, even among the white people, and I am versed in their ways, and in the ways of many peoples. I am not a tree, born to stand in one place always and know not what there be over the next hill; for I am Canim, The Canoe, made to go here and there and to journey and quest up and down the length and breadth of the world."

She bowed her head humbly. "It is true. I have eaten fish and meat and berries all my days, and lived in a little corner of the earth. Nor did I dream the world was so large until you stole me from my people, and I cooked and carried for you on the endless trails." She looked up at him suddenly. "Tell me, Canim, does this trail ever end?"

"Nay," he answered. "My trail is like the world; it never ends. My trail *is* the world, and I have traveled it since the time my legs could carry me, and I shall travel it until I die. My father and my mother may be dead, but it is long since I looked upon them, and I do not care. My tribe is like your tribe. It stays in the one place, — which is far from here, — but I care naught for my tribe, for I am Canim, The Canoe!"

"And must I, Li Wan, who am weary, travel always your trail until I die?"

"You, Li Wan, are my wife, and the wife travels the husband's trail wheresoever it goes. It is the law. And were it not the law, yet would it be the law of Canim, who is lawgiver unto himself and his."

She bowed her head again, for she knew no other law than that man was the master of woman.

"Be not in haste," Canim cautioned her, as she began to strap the meagre camp outfit to her pack. "The sun is yet hot, and the trail leads down and the footing is good."

She dropped her work obediently and resumed her seat.

Canim regarded her with speculative interest. "You do not squat on your hams like other women," he remarked.

"No," she answered. "It never came easy. It tires me, and I cannot take my rest that way."

"And why is it your feet point not straight before you?"

"I do not know, save that they are unlike the feet of other women."

A satisfied light crept into his eyes, but otherwise he gave no sign.

"Like other women, your hair is black; but have you ever noticed that it is soft and fine, softer and finer than the hair of other women?"

"I have noticed," she answered shortly, for she was not pleased at such cold analysis of her sex deficiencies.

"It is a year, now, since I took you from your people," he went on, "and you are nigh as shy and afraid of me as when first I looked upon you. How does this thing be?"

Li Wan shook her head. "I am afraid of you, Canim, you are so big and strange. And further, before you looked upon me, even, I was afraid of all the young men. I do not know — I cannot say — only, it seemed, somehow, as though I should not be for them, as though" —

"Ay," he encouraged, impatient at her faltering.

"As though they were not my kind."

"Not your kind?" he demanded slowly. "Then what is your kind?"

"I do not know, I" — She shook her head in a bewildered manner. "I cannot put into words the way I felt. It was strangeness in me. I was unlike other maidens who sought the young men slyly. I could not care for the young men that way. It would have been a great wrong, it seemed, and an ill deed."

"What is the first thing you remember?" Canim asked with abrupt irrelevance.

"Pow-Wah-Kaan, my mother."

"And naught else before Pow-Wah-Kaan?"

"Naught else."

But Canim, holding her eyes with his, searched her secret soul and saw it waver.

"Think, and think hard, Li Wan!" he threatened.

She stammered, and her eyes were piteous and pleading, but his will dominated her and wrung from her lips the reluctant speech.

"But it was only dreams, Canim, ill dreams of childhood, shadows of things not real, visions such as the dogs, sleeping in the sun warmth, behold and whine out against."

"Tell me," he commanded, "of the things before Pow-Wah-Kaan, your mother."

"They are forgotten memories," she protested. "As a child I dreamed awake, with my eyes open to the day, and when I spoke of the strange things I saw I was laughed at, and the other children were afraid and drew away from me. And when I spoke of the things I saw to Pow-Wah-Kaan, she chided me and said they were evil; also she beat me. It was a sickness, I believe, like the falling sickness that comes to old men; and in time I grew better and dreamed no more. And now — I cannot remember" — She brought her hand in a confused manner to her forehead, "They are there, somewhere, but I cannot find them, only" —

"Only," Canim repeated, holding her.

"Only one thing. But you will laugh at its foolishness, it is so unreal."

"Nay, Li Wan. Dreams are dreams. They may be memories of other lives we have lived. I was once a moose. I firmly believe I was once a moose. What of the things I have seen in dreams, and heard?"

Strive as he would to hide it, a growing anxiety was manifest, but Li Wan,

groping after the words with which to paint the picture, took no heed.

"I see a snow-tramped space among the trees," she began, "and across the snow the sign of a man where he has dragged himself heavily on hand and knee. And I see, too, the man in the snow, and it seems I am very close to him when I look. He is unlike real men, for he has hair on his face, much hair, and the hair of his face and head is yellow like the summer coat of the weasel. His eyes are closed, but they open and search about. They are blue like the sky, and look into mine and search no more. And his hand moves, slow, as from weakness, and I feel" —

"Ay," Canim whispered hoarsely. "You feel" —

"No, no!" she cried in haste. "I feel nothing. Did I say 'feel'? I did not mean it. It could not be that I should mean it. I see, and I see only, and that is all I see — a man in the snow, with eyes like the sky and hair like the weasel. I have seen it many times, and always it is the same — a man in the snow" —

"And do you see yourself?" he asked, leaning forward and regarding her intently. "Do you ever see yourself and the man in the snow?"

"Why should I see myself? Am I not real?"

His muscles relaxed and he sank back, an exultant satisfaction in his eyes which he turned from her so that she might not see.

"I will tell you, Li Wan," he spoke decisively; "you were a little bird in some life before, a little moose-bird, when you saw this thing, and the memory of it is with you yet. It is not strange. I was once a moose, and my father's father afterward became a bear — so said the shaman,¹ and the shaman cannot lie. Thus, on the Trail of the Gods, we pass from life to life, and the gods know only and understand. Dreams and the shadows of dreams be memo-

¹ Medicine man.

ries, nothing more, and the dog, whining asleep in the sun warmth, doubtless sees and remembers things gone before. Bash, there, was a warrior once. I do firmly believe he was once a warrior."

Canim tossed a bone to the brute and got upon his feet. "Come, let us begone. The sun is yet hot, but it will get no cooler."

"And these white people, what are they like?" Li Wan made bold to ask.

"Like you and me," he answered, "only they are less dark of skin. You will be among them ere the day is dead."

Canim lashed the sleeping-robe to his one hundred and fifty pound pack, smeared his face with wet clay, and sat down to rest till Li Wan had finished loading the dogs. Olo cringed at sight of the club in her hand, and gave no trouble when the bundle of forty pounds and odd was strapped upon him. But Bash was aggrieved and truculent, and could not forbear to whimper and snarl as he was forced to receive the burden. He bristled his back and bared his teeth as she drew the straps tight, the while throwing all the malignancy of his nature into the glances shot at her sidelong and backward. And Canim chuckled and said, "Did I not say I believed he was once a very great warrior?"

"These furs will bring a price," he remarked as he adjusted his head-strap and lifted his pack clear of the ground. "A very big price. The white men pay well for such goods, for they have no time to hunt and are soft to the cold. Soon shall we feast, Li Wan, as you have feasted never in all the lives before."

She grunted acknowledgment and gratitude for her lord's condescension, slipped into the harness, and bent forward to the load.

"The next time I am born, I would be born a white man," he added, and swung off down the trail which dived into the gorge at his feet.

The dogs followed close at his heels,

and Li Wan brought up the rear. But her thoughts were far away, across the Ice Mountains to the east, to the little corner of the earth where her childhood had been lived. Ever as a child, she remembered, she had been looked upon as strange, as one with an affliction. Truly she had dreamed awake and been scolded and beaten for the remarkable visions she saw, till, after a time, she had outgrown them. But not utterly. Though they troubled her no more waking, they yet came to her in her sleep, grown woman that she was, and many a night of nightmare was hers, filled with fluttering shapes, vague and meaningless. The talk with Canim had excited her, and down all the twisted slant of the divide she harked back to the mocking fantasies of her dreams.

"Let us take breath," Canim said, when they had tapped midway the bed of the main creek.

He rested his pack on a jutting rock, slipped the head-strap, and sat down. Li Wan joined him, and the dogs sprawled panting on the ground beside them. At their feet rippled the glacial drip of the hills, but it was muddy and discolored, as soiled by some commotion of the earth.

"Why is this?" Li Wan asked.

"Because of the white men who work in the ground. Listen!" He held up his hand, and they heard the ring of pick and shovel and the sound of men's voices. "They are made mad by *gold*, and work without ceasing that they may find it. *Gold*? It is yellow and comes from the ground, and is considered of great value. It is also a measure of price."

But Li Wan's roving eyes had called her attention from him. A few yards below, and partly screened by a clump of young spruce, the tiered logs of a cabin rose to meet its overhanging roof of dirt. A thrill ran through her, and all her dream phantoms roused up and stirred about uneasily.

"Canim," she whispered in an agony

of apprehension. "Canim, what is that?"

"The white man's tepee, in which he eats and sleeps."

She eyed it wistfully, grasping its virtues at a glance and thrilling again at the unaccountable sensations it aroused. "It must be very warm in time of frost," she said aloud, though she felt impelled to form strange sounds with her lips.

She longed to utter them, but did not, and the next instant Canim said, "It is called a *cabin*."

Her heart gave a great leap — these were the sounds, the very sounds! She looked about her in sudden awe. How should she know that strange word before ever she heard it? What could be the matter? And then, with a shock, half of fear and half of delight, she realized that for the first time in her life there had been sanity and significance in the promptings of her dreams.

"*Cabin*," she repeated to herself. "*Cabin*." Then an incoherent flood of dream stuff welled up and up till her head was dizzy and her heart seemed bursting. Shadows, and looming bulks of things, and unintelligible associations fluttered and whirled about, and she strove vainly with her consciousness to grasp and hold them. For she felt that there, in that welter of memories, was the key of the mystery; could she but grasp and hold it, all would be clear and plain.

O Canim! O Pow-Wah-Kaan! O shades and shadows, what was that?

She turned to Canim, speechless and trembling, the dream stuff in mad, overwhelming riot. She was sick and fainting, and could only listen to the ravishing sounds which proceeded from the cabin in a wonderful rhythm.

"Hum, fiddle," Canim vouchsafed.

But she did not hear him, for in the ecstasy she was experiencing it seemed at last that all things were coming clear. Now! now! she thought. A sudden moisture swept into her eyes, and the

tears trickled down her cheeks. The mystery was unlocking, but the faintness was overpowering her. If only she could hold herself long enough! If only — but the landscape bent and crumpled up, and the hills swayed back and forth across the sky, as she sprang to her feet and screamed, "*Daddy! Daddy!*" Then the sun reeled, and darkness smote her, and she pitched forward limp and headlong among the rocks.

Canim looked to see if her neck had been broken by the heavy pack, grunted his satisfaction, and threw water from the creek upon her. She came to slowly, with choking sobs, and sat up.

"It is not good, the hot sun on the head," he ventured.

And she answered, "No, it is not good, and the pack bore upon me hard."

"We shall camp early, so that you may sleep long and win strength," he said gently. "And if we go now we shall be the quicker to bed."

She said nothing, but tottered to her feet in obedience and stirred up the dogs. Taking the swing of his pace mechanically, she followed him past the cabin scarce daring to breathe. But no sounds issued forth, though the door was open and smoke curling upward from the sheet-iron stovepipe.

They came upon a man in the bend of the creek, white of skin and blue of eye, and for a moment Li Wan saw the other man in the snow. But she saw dimly, for she was weak and tired from what she had undergone. Still, she looked at him curiously, and stopped with Canim to watch him at his work. He was washing gravel in a large pan, with a circular, tilting movement; and as they looked, giving a deft flirt, he flashed up the yellow gold in a broad streak across the bottom of the pan.

"Very rich, this creek," Canim told her, as they went on. "Some time I will find such a creek, and then I shall be a big man."

Cabins and men grew more plentiful,

till they came to where the main portion of the creek was spread out before them. It was the scene of a vast devastation. Everywhere the earth was torn and rent as though by a Titan's struggles. Where there were no up-thrown mounds of gravel, great holes and trenches yawned, and chasms where the thick rime of the earth had been peeled to bed-rock. There was no worn channel for the creek, and its waters, dammed up, diverted, flying through the air on giddy flumes, trickling into sinks and low places, and raised by huge water wheels, were used and used again a thousand times. The hills had been stripped of their trees, and their raw sides gored and perforated by great timber slides and prospect holes. And over all, like a monstrous race of ants, was flung an army of men, — mud-covered, dirty, disheveled men, who crawled in and out of the holes of their digging, crept like big bugs along the flumes, and toiled and sweated at the gravel heaps which they kept in constant unrest, — men, as far as the eye could see, even to the rims of the hilltops, digging, tearing, and scouring the face of nature.

Li Wan was appalled at the tremendous upheaval. "Truly, these men are mad," she said to Canim.

"Small wonder. The gold they dig after is a great thing," he replied. "The greatest thing in the world."

For hours they threaded the chaos of greed, Canim eagerly intent, Li Wan weak and listless. She knew she had been on the verge of disclosure, and she felt that she was still on the verge of disclosure; but the nervous strain she had undergone had tired her, and she passively waited for the thing, she knew not what, to happen. From every hand her senses snatched up and conveyed to her innumerable impressions, each of which became a dull excitation to her jaded imagination. Somewhere within her, responsive notes were answering to the things without; forgotten and un-

dreamed-of correspondences were being renewed; and she was aware of it in an incurious way, and her soul was troubled, but she was not equal to the mental exaltation necessary to transmute and understand. So she plodded wearily on at the heels of her lord, content to wait for that which she knew, somewhere, somehow, must happen.

After undergoing the mad bondage of man, the creek finally returned to its ancient ways, all soiled and smirched from its toil, and coiled lazily among the broad flats and timbered spaces where the valley widened to the mouth. Here the "pay" ran out, and men were loath to loiter with the lure yet beyond. And here, as Li Wan paused to prod Olo with her staff, she heard the mellow silver of a woman's laughter.

Before a cabin sat a woman, fair of skin and rosy as a child, dimpling with glee at the words of another woman in the doorway. But the woman who sat shook about her great masses of dark wet hair which yielded up its dampness to the warm caresses of the sun.

For an instant Li Wan stood transfixed. Then she was aware of a blinding flash, and a snap, as though something gave way; and the woman before the cabin vanished, and the cabin, and the tall spruce timber, and the jagged sky line, and Li Wan saw another woman, in the shine of another sun, brushing great masses of black hair and singing as she brushed. And Li Wan heard the words of the song, and understood, and was a child again. She was smitten with a vision, wherein all the troublesome dreams merged and became one, and shapes and shadows took up their accustomed round, and all was clear and plain and real. Many pictures jostled past, strange scenes, and trees, and flowers, and people; and she saw them and knew them all.

"When you were a little bird, a little moose-bird," Canim said, his eyes upon her and burning into her.

"When I was a little moose-bird,"

she whispered, so faint and low he scarcely heard. And she knew she lied, as she bent her head to the strap and took the swing of the trail.

And such was the strangeness of it, the real now became unreal. The mile tramp and the pitching of camp by the edge of the stream seemed like a passage in a nightmare. She cooked the meat, fed the dogs, and unlashed the packs as in a dream, and it was not until Canim began to sketch his next wandering that she became herself again.

"The Klondike runs into the Yukon," he was saying; "a mighty river, mightier than the Mackenzie, of which you know. So we go, you and I, down to Fort o' Yukon. With dogs, in time of winter, it is twenty sleeps. Then we follow the Yukon away into the west — one hundred sleeps, two hundred, I have never heard. It is very far. And then we come to the sea. You know nothing of the sea, so let me tell you. As the lake is to the island, so the sea is to the land; all the rivers run to it, and it is without end. I have seen it at Hudson Bay; I have yet to see it in Alaska. And then we may take a great canoe upon the sea, you and I, Li Wan, or we may follow the land into the south many a hundred sleeps. And after that I do not know, save that I am Canim, The Canoe, wanderer and far-journeyer over the earth!"

She sat and listened, and fear ate into her heart as she pondered over this plunge into the illimitable wilderness. "It is a weary way," was all she said, head bowed on knee in resignation.

Then it was a splendid thought came to her, and at the wonder of it she was all a-glow. She went down to the stream and washed the dried clay from her face. When the ripples died away she stared long at her mirrored features; but sun and weather had done their work, and, with the roughness and bronze, her skin was not soft and dimpled as a child's. But the thought was still splendid and the glow unabated as

she crept in beside her husband under the sleeping-robe.

She lay awake, staring up at the blue of the sky and waiting for Canim to sink into the first deep sleep. When this came about, she wormed slowly and carefully away, tucked the robe around him, and stood up. At her second step, Bash growled savagely. She whispered persuasively to him and glanced at the man. Canim was snoring profoundly. Then she turned, and with swift, noiseless feet sped up the back trail.

Mrs. Evelyn Van Wyck was just preparing for bed. Bored by the duties put upon her by society, her wealth, and widowed blessedness, she had journeyed into the Northland and gone to housekeeping in a cosy cabin on the edge of the diggings. Here, aided and abetted by her friend and companion, Myrtle Giddings, she played at living close to the soil, and cultivated the primitive with refined abandon.

She strove to get away from the generations of culture and parlor selection, and sought the earth-grip her ancestors had forfeited. Likewise she induced mental states which she fondly believed to approximate those of the stone folk, and just now, as she put up her hair for the pillow, she was indulging her fancy with a palæolithic wooing. The details consisted principally of cave dwellings and cracked marrow-bones, intersprinkled with fierce carnivora, hairy mammoths, and combats with rude flaked knives of flint; but the sensations were delicious. And as Evelyn Van Wyck fled through the sombre forest aisles before the too arduous advances of her slant-browed, skin-clad wooer, the door of the cabin opened, without the courtesy of knock, and a skin-clad woman, savage and primitive, came in.

"Mercy!"

With a leap that would have done credit to a cave woman, Miss Giddings landed in safety behind the table. But Mrs. Van Wyck held her ground. She

noted that the intruder was laboring under a strong excitement, and cast a swift glance backward to assure herself that the way was clear to the bunk, where the big Colt's revolver lay beneath a pillow.

"Greeting, O Woman of the Wondrous Hair," said Li Wan.

But she said it in her own tongue, — the tongue spoken in but a little corner of the earth, and the women did not understand.

"Shall I go for help?" Miss Giddings quavered.

"The poor creature is harmless, I think," Mrs. Van Wyck replied. "And just look at her skin clothes, ragged and trail-worn, and all that. They are certainly unique. I shall buy them for my collection. Get my sack, Myrtle, please, and set up the scales."

Li Wan followed the shaping of the lips, but the words were unintelligible, and then, for the first time, she realized, in a moment of suspense and indecision, that there was no medium of communication between them.

And at the passion of her dumbness she cried out, with arms stretched wide apart, "O Woman, thou art sister of mine!"

The tears coursed down her cheeks as she yearned toward them, and the break in her voice carried the sorrow she could not utter. But Miss Giddings was trembling, and even Mrs. Van Wyck was disturbed.

"I would live as you live. Thy ways are my ways, and our ways be one. My husband is Canim, The Canoe, and he is big and strange, and I am afraid. His trail is all the world, and never ends, and I am weary. My mother was like you, and her hair was as thine, and her eyes. And life was soft to me, then, and the sun warm."

She knelt humbly, and bent her head at Mrs. Van Wyck's feet. But Mrs. Van Wyck drew away, frightened at her vehemence.

Li Wan stood up, panting for speech.

Her dumb lips could not articulate her overmastering consciousness of kind.

"Trade? You trade?" Mrs. Van Wyck questioned, slipping, after the manner of the superior peoples, into pigeon tongue.

She touched Li Wan's ragged skins to indicate her choice, and poured several hundreds of gold into the blower. She stirred the dust about and trickled its yellow lustre temptingly through her fingers. But Li Wan saw only the fingers, milk-white and shapely, tapering daintily to the rosy, jewel-like nails; and she placed her own hand alongside, all work-worn and calloused, and wept.

Mrs. Van Wyck misunderstood. "Gold," she encouraged. "Good gold! You trade? You changee for changee?" And she laid her hand again on Li Wan's skin garments.

"How much? You sell? How much?" she persisted, running her hand against the way of the hair so that she might make sure of the sinew-thread seam.

But Li Wan was deaf as well, and the woman's speech was without significance. Dismay at her failure sat upon her. How could she identify herself with these women? For she knew they were of the one breed, blood-sisters among men and the women of men. Her eyes roved wildly about the interior, taking in the soft draperies hanging around, the feminine garments, the oval mirror, and the dainty toilet accessories beneath. And the things haunted her, for she had seen like things before; and as she looked at them her lips involuntarily formed sounds which her throat trembled to utter. Then a thought flashed upon her, and she steadied herself. She must be calm. She must control herself. There must be no misunderstanding this time, or else, — and she shook with a storm of suppressed tears and steadied herself again.

She put her hand on the table.

"Table," she clearly and distinctly enunciated. "Table," she repeated.

She looked at Mrs. Van Wyck, who nodded approbation. Li Wan exulted, but brought her will to bear and held herself steady. "Stove," she went on. "Stove."

Then at every nod of Mrs. Van Wyck, Li Wan's excitement mounted. Now stumbling and halting, and again in feverish haste, as the recrudescence of forgotten words was fast or slow, she moved about the cabin, naming article after article. And when she paused, finally, it was in triumph, with body erect and head thrown back, expectant, waiting.

"C-a-t," Mrs. Van Wyck laughingly spelled out in kindergarten fashion. "I — see — the — cat — catch — the — rat."

Li Wan nodded her head seriously. They were beginning to understand at last, these women. The blood flushed darkly under her bronze at the thought, and she smiled and nodded her head still more vigorously.

Mrs. Van Wyck turned to her companion. "Received a smattering of mission education somewhere, I fancy, and has come to show it off."

"Of course," Miss Giddings tittered. "Little fool! We shall lose our sleep with her vanity."

"All the same I want that jacket. If it is old, the workmanship is good, — a most excellent specimen." She returned to her visitor. "Changee for changee? You! — changee for changee? How much? Eh? How much, you?"

"Perhaps she'd prefer a dress or something," Miss Giddings suggested.

Mrs. Van Wyck went up to Li Wan and made signs that she would exchange her wrapper for the jacket. And to further the transaction, she took Li Wan's hand and placed it amid the lace and ribbons of the flowing bosom, and rubbed the fingers back and forth that she might feel the texture. But the jeweled butterfly which loosely held the

fold in place was insecurely fastened, and the front of the gown fell aside, exposing a firm white breast which had never known the lip-clasp of a child.

Mrs. Van Wyck coolly repaired the mischief; but Li Wan uttered a loud cry, and ripped and tore at her skin-shirt till her own breast showed firm and white as Evelyn Van Wyck's. Murmuring inarticulately and making swift signs, she strove to establish the kinship.

"A half-breed," Mrs. Van Wyck commented. "I thought so from her hair."

Miss Giddings made a fastidious gesture. "Proud of her father's white skin. It's beastly. Do give her something, Evelyn, and make her go."

But the other woman sighed. "Poor creature, I wish I could do something for her."

There was a crunching on the gravel without. Then the cabin door swung wide and Canim stalked in. Miss Giddings saw a vision of sudden death and screamed, but Mrs. Van Wyck faced him composedly.

"What do you want?" she demanded.

"How do," Canim answered suavely and directly, pointing at the same time to Li Wan. "Um my wife."

He reached out to her, but she waved him back.

"Speak, Canim! Tell them I am" —

"Daughter of Pow-Wah-Kaan? Nay, of what is it to them that they should care? Better should I tell them

thou art an ill wife, given to creeping from thy husband's bed when sleep is heavy in his eyes."

Again he reached out for her, but she fled away from him to Mrs. Van Wyck, at whose feet she made frenzied appeal, and whose knees she tried to clasp. But the lady stepped back, giving permission with her eyes to Canim. He gripped Li Wan under the shoulders and raised her. She fought with him, in a madness of despair, till his chest was heaving with the exertion and they had reeled about over half the room.

"Let me go, Canim!" she sobbed.

But he twisted her wrist till she ceased to struggle. "The memories of the little moose-bird are over-strong and make trouble," he began.

But she interrupted. "I know! I know! I see the man in the snow, and, as never before, I see him crawl on hand and knee. And I, who am a little child, am carried on his back. And this is before Pow-Wah-Kaan and the time I came to live in a little corner of the earth."

"You know," he answered, forcing her toward the door; "but you will go with me down the Yukon and forget."

"Never shall I forget! So long as my skin is white shall I remember!"

She clutched frantically at the door-post and looked a last appeal to Mrs. Evelyn Van Wyck.

"Then will I teach thee to forget, I, Canim, The Canoe!"

As he spoke, he pulled her fingers clear and passed out with her upon the trail.

Jack London.

MY COOKERY BOOKS.¹

II.

"NEXT to eating good dinners, a healthy man with a benevolent turn of

mind must like, I think, to read about them." The words are Thackeray's, and they encourage me, if I need encouragement, in my belief that to go on

¹ See *Atlantic* for June, 1901, p. 789.

writing about my Cookery Books is a duty I owe not only to myself, but to the world.

If I have owned to a sneaking preference for the little calf and vellum covered duodecimos of the seventeenth century, courteous and gallant as the Stuart days to which they belong, I should lose no time in adding that it is to the eighteenth century I am indebted for the great treasure of my collection, — Mrs. Glasse in the famous “*pot folio*” of the first edition. The copy belonged, as I have explained, to George Augustus Sala, and came up for sale when his library was disposed of at Sotheby’s in the July of 1896. This library was a disappointment to most people, — to none more than to me. I had heard much of Sala’s cookery books, but small as my collection then was I found only three that I had not already. Bartolommeo Scappi’s *Cuoco Secreto*,¹ in fine binding, but not in the first edition (which I secured a year or two after); The *Delmonico Cook Book*, and excellent it is; and Mrs. Glasse, — *The Art of Cookery, Made Plain and Easy, which far Exceeds Every Thing of the Kind yet Published*, to give her book its full title. In the preliminary paragraphs that went the round of the press, Mrs. Glasse alone received the honor of special mention; in that dingy little salesroom in Wellington Street, where, however high passions — and prices — may run, the group at the table seem to have come together for nothing more exciting than a sociable nap, Mrs. Glasse again held the place of honor in a glass case apart. Everything pointed to a struggle. It would take a braver woman than I to face the “knock-outs” and “rings” before which the private buyer is said to be as a lamb led to the slaughter. When the day of the sale came, like royalty at important functions, I was “represented” at Sotheby’s, and myself stayed at

home with my emotions. The sequel is known. Is not the book on my shelves? It came that same evening, the two others with it. “I am pleased,” wrote my representative, “to be able to send you the three books, and all below your limit, and hope you will be satisfied.” Satisfied? Was there ever a woman yet to whom a bargain was not half the joy of possession?

Sala, it was currently reported, valued the book at five hundred dollars; I paid but fifty. It was not because he overestimated its rarity. The first edition was almost as rare as he thought. On the fly-leaf of his copy he wrote, July, 1876, that only three others were known to be in existence: one at the British Museum, a second at the Bodleian, and a third in the library of a country clergyman. Since then only two others, to my knowledge, have materialized. But Sala was a vandal; his copy was evidently in a shocking state when he found it, in a barrow in a South London slum according to the legend, and he had the battered and torn pages mended, and the book bound in substantial and expensive, if inappropriate binding. So far so good. Still he also had it interleaved. He seems to have believed that his own trivial newspaper correspondence on the subject carefully pasted in would increase its value. How often have I looked at the book and decided, at whatever cost, to get rid of the interleaving and the newspaper clippings, an insult alike to Mrs. Glasse and myself! How often have I decided that to reduce it to its original slimness would be to destroy its pedigree; not a very distinguished pedigree, but still the copy was known in the auction room as Sala’s, and, therefore, as Sala’s must it not remain? Whoever can settle this problem for me will lift a burden of responsibility from shoulders not strong enough to bear it.

Now, I have the first edition, I do not mind admitting that no other trea-

¹ It was at the Court of Pius V. that he held this important position.

tise on cookery owes its reputation so little to merit, so much to chance. It was popular in its own day, I grant you. The Biographical Dictionary says that, except the Bible, it had the greatest sale in the language. It went into edition after edition. There are ten in the British Museum. I own five myself, though I vowed that the first sufficed for my wants. The book was republished in Edinburgh. It was revived as late as 1852, perhaps later still, for all I as yet know. But almost all the eighteenth-century books shared its popularity, — only the Biographical Dictionary has not happened to hear of them. I have *The Compleat Housewife*, by E. Smith, in the eighteenth edition; I have *Elizabeth Moxon's English Housewife*, in the thirteenth; I have *John Farley's London Art of Cookery*, in the eleventh, and I might go on through a list of titles and authors long forgotten by every one but me. All are as amusing now as the *Art of Cookery*, and were probably very useful in their day. The receipts are much the same; indeed, the diligence with which the authorities upon cookery in the eighteenth century borrowed one from the other, without a word of acknowledgment, ought to have kept the law courts busy. Nor does the manner vary more than the matter. Of most of the books the authors could say as truthfully as Mrs. Glasse of hers, that they were "not wrote in the high polite stile." Not even her sex gives Mrs. Glasse distinction in an age when authorship or public practice of any sort was indelicate in a female. Mary Eale, E. Smith, Elizabeth Raffald, — a charming person in a mob cap, if you can trust her portrait, — Charlotte Mason, Elizabeth Cleland, Martha Bradley, were a few of her many rivals. And where are they now?

"Where 's Hipparchia, and where is Thais?"

If Mrs. Glasse alone survives, it is for one reason only, and that the most

unreasonable. Her fame is due not to her genius, for she really had none, but to the fact that her own generation believed there was "no sich person," and after generations believed in her as the author of a phrase she never wrote. And, indeed, no one would remember even the doubt at the time thrown upon her identity, but for Boswell. I know Cumberland also is an authority for the report that Dr. Hill wrote the book. Hill, he says, was "a needy author who could not make a dinner out of the press till, by a happy transformation into Hannah Glasse, he turned himself into a cook and sold receipts for made dishes to all the savoury readers in the kingdom. Then, indeed, the press acknowledged him second in fame only to John Bunyan; his feasts kept pace in sale with Nelson's Fasts, and when his own name was fairly written out of credit, he wrote himself into immortality under an *alias*." But nobody nowadays reads Cumberland's *Memoirs*, and everybody reads Boswell, — or pretends to. The subject came up at Mr. Dilley's dinner-table. "Mrs. Glasse's Cookery, which is the best, was written by Dr. Hill. Half the trade knows this," said Mr. Dilley, who, being in the trade himself, ought to have been an authority. But Dr. Johnson was of another opinion: "Women can spin very well, but they cannot make a good book of cookery." Mrs. Glasse's is not a good book, mistakes occurring in it; therefore, Dr. Hill, a man, could not have written it. I agree with Dr. Johnson's conclusions, but on far simpler grounds. The impersonation of Mrs. Glasse would, in the end, have become too elaborate a joke to carry through, had Dr. Hill been as ingenious and as wanting in veracity as in Dr. Johnson's description of him to George III. The first edition of the *Art of Cookery* — the folio, sold at Mrs. Ashburn's China Shop, corner of Fleet Ditch, and at Mrs. Wharton's, at the Blue Coat Boy, near the Royal

Exchange — was published anonymously in 1747. "By a Lady" is printed on the title-page. Only later editions, the octavo, sold by innumerable booksellers, Dr. Johnson's friend, Mr. Millar, among them, appear with the name H. Glasse, printed on the title-page and in facsimile above the first chapter. To invent the name would have been no great tax on the imagination. But, by the fourth edition, which I search for in vain, Dr. Hill would have had to invent a trade as well. For in this edition, and in this one only, an impressive engraved frontispiece describes Hannah Glasse — and if the description is long, it is too inimitable not to be quoted in full — as "Habit Maker to Her Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales, in Tavistock St., Covent Garden, Makes and Sells all sorts of Riding Habits, Joseph's Great Coats, Horsemen's Coats, Russia Coats, Hussar Coats, Bedgowns, Nightgowns, and Robe de Chambers, Widows' Weeds, Sultains, Sultans, and Cartouches after the neatest manner, Likewise, Parliament, Judges' and Chancellers' Robes, Italian Robes, Cossockroons, Capuchins, Newmarket Cloaks, Long Cloaks, Short Do., Quilted Coats, Hoop Petticoats, Under Coats, All Sorts of Fringes and Laces as cheap as from the makers. Bonnetts, Hatts, Short Hoods, and Caps, of all Sorts, Plain Sattins, Sassetts, and Persians. All Sorts of Child-bed Linning, Cradles, Baskets and Robes. Also Stuffs, Camblets, Cabinances, and Worsted Damasks, Norwich Crape, and Bumbasins, Scarlet Cloaths, Duffels and Frizes, Dimitys, Newmarket Hunting Caps, etc. Likewise all sorts of Masquerade Dresses."

More than this, Dr. Hill, thus established on copper plate, would have had promptly to invent his failure. In

1754, three years later, Hannah Glasse figured among the bankrupts of the year; "Hannah Glasse of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, Warehousekeeper," is the entry. He would also have had to claim two other books: *The Servant's Directory*, published in 1760, almost fifteen years after the *Art of Cookery*, a book I have never been able to find,¹ and *The Compleat Confectioner*, published in I cannot say what year, for my copy, a first edition, has no date, and the book is known neither to Hazlitt nor Vicaire. And as a last touch, he must have had the brilliant idea of opening a cookery school in Edinburgh, if I can trust "M. D.," who wrote a note on the fly-leaf of my copy of *The Compleat Confectioner* to protest against the revival, in the *Times*, of the old scandal. This was in 1866, when some one rashly called Mrs. Glasse "Mrs. Harris." Mrs. Glasse, M. D. says, "lived in the flesh in Edinburgh about 1790. She taught cookery to classes of young ladies. My mother was a pupil, and fondly showed in her old age to her children a copy of Glasse's *Cookery*, with the autograph of the authoress, gained as a prize in the *School of Cookery*." "M. D." at once spoils her case by adding "This book does contain 'Catch your Hare.'" Not before seeing it could I believe. I have spent hours in pursuit of the famous phrase, or, at least, the reason of the misquotation, in the hope that success might, forever after, link my name with that of Hannah Glasse. But I can come no nearer to the clue than the "First Case your hare," found in every cookery book of the period, and that Mr. Churton Collins has just been offering as an explanation, and so depriving me of the chance of being the first with even this obvious discovery.

¹ Just as I am re-reading this before trusting it to the post, a package is handed to me. I open it. *The Servant's Directory*, or *House-keeper's Companion*, by H. Glasse. The book I have been searching for during long years!

The miracle I owe, I am proud to say, to Mr. Janvier, whose intimacy with Mr. Hutchinson, Port of Philadelphia, has made him sympathize with me in my study of the Science of the Gullet.

Well, anyway, believe in Mrs. Glasse, or not, the cookery book that bears her name is the only one published in the eighteenth century now remembered by the whole world. And yet, it is in eighteenth-century books my collection is richest. They are mostly substantial octavos, calf bound, much the worse for wear, often "embellished" with an elegant frontispiece, a portrait of the author, or picture of the kitchen, and, I regret to say, seldom very beautiful examples of the printer's art. Several have been given to me by friends who know my weakness. For instance, few books in my entire library do I prize more than the *Collection of above Three Hundred Receipts in Cookery, Physick and Surgery for the use of all Good Wives, Tender Mothers, and Careful Nurses*, not so much because it is curious and tolerably rare, as because of the little legend, "Homage to Autolyceus,¹ Austin Dobson," on the fly-leaf. The greater number I have bought at different times, but it is to be noted that never, like Sala, have I picked one up from a costermonger's barrow, though, for a while, I made weekly pilgrimages to Whitechapel in their pursuit. Usually they have come through the second-hand booksellers. A few sympathizers, Dr. Furnivall chief among them, never fail to let me know of a chance for a bargain. Once I was offered some odd twenty, all in one lot, before they were advertised, and I hardly receive a catalogue that does not contain two or three in its list. Nor are they often costly. For the price of one Mrs. Glasse in the first edition, you can have a whole series of her contemporaries. And so this section of my collection has grown, until I have some sixty or seventy books published in England alone during the eighteenth century.

If I were asked to point out any one

¹ Perhaps I should explain that my articles on cookery appeared in the *Pall Mall*, under the title of *Wares of Autolyceus*, and it was

characteristic they all share in common, I would say it was the businesslike seriousness of their authors. The amateur had been silenced forever by artists like Robert May and Will Rabisha. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, almost all the new cookery books were being written by cooks. And the new authors were in haste, on the very title-page, to present their credentials. Henry Howard (*England's Newest Way in all Sorts of Cookery*, 1703, — my edition, alas, is 1707) and J. Hall (*The Queen's Royal Cookery*, 1713) were Free Cooks of London. Patrick Lamb (*The Complete Court Cook*, 1710) was "near fifty years Master Cook to their late Majesties King Charles II, King James II, King William, Queen Mary, and to her Present Majesty, Queen Anne," and in the *Ordinances and Regulations for the Government of the Royal Household*, you can learn to a halfpenny how much he earned in a year. Charles Carter (*The Compleat City and Country Cook*, 1732), whose boast it was that he came of "a long race of predecessors," presided over the kitchens of the Duke of Argyle, the Earl of Pontefract, and Lord Cornwallis. John Nott (*The Cooks' and Confectioners' Dictionary*, 1723), Vincent La Chapelle (*The Modern Cook*, 1751, but then mine is a fourth edition), William Verral (*A Complete System of Cookery*, 1759), — all I could name have as irreproachable references. A few were not cooks in service, but teachers: Edward Kidder, Pastry-Master, for one, who ran two schools: in Queen Street, near St. Thomas Apostle's, where he held his classes on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, and at Furnival's Inn in Holborn, where he presided on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays; he also was willing, kind soul, to teach ladies in their own houses. I respect Kidder while I was writing them that Mr. Dobson gave me the book.

as a man of originality, for his *Receipts of Pastry and Cookery* is unlike any book of the same period. From the frontispiece, where he appears in ample wig, with one hand uplifted as if in exhortation to his class, to the amazing plans for setting and decorating a dinner-table, it is neatly engraved and printed on one side of the page only, the receipts written out in the most beautiful copper-plate writing. He was original in his spelling, too: "Sauceages," I consider a gem even in the eighteenth century; and he was surely a forerunner of the modern cockney, when he wrote, "To roast an Hare."

The ladies were as eager to vouch for their qualifications. Mrs. Mary Eale, whose *Receipts* were published in 1708, was Confectioner to Queen Anne; Mrs. Charlotte Mason was a Housekeeper who had had "upwards of Thirty Years' Experience in Families of the First Fashion;" Mrs. Elizabeth Raffald held the same position to the Hon. Lady Elizabeth Warburton, and Mrs. Sarah Martin, to Freeman Bower, Esq., of Bawtry, — I have his copy of her book, with receipts in his own handwriting on pages inserted for the purpose, with a note testifying to their origin by his great-nephew, Canon Jackson! Others proudly proclaimed their town or country, as if their reputation made further detail superfluous: Mrs. Mary Wilson of Hertfordshire, Mrs. Sarah Harrison of Devonshire, Mrs. Susannah Carter of Clerkenwell, Mrs. Ann Shackleford of Winchester. And then there were the rivals of Edward Kidder: Mrs. Frazer, Mrs. Cleland, and Mrs. Maciver taught the Arts of Cookery, Pastry, and Confectionery in Edinburgh, where, if M. D. is to be believed, Hannah Glasse joined them after her adventures in the Bankruptcy Court. But whatever their qualifications, they are to be counted by the dozen, so that I can but wonder why it seemed so astonishing a thing for Hannah More,

Mary Wollstonecraft, and the other *Blue Stockings* of the eighteenth century to rush into print.

The seriousness with which these cooks and housekeepers and professors took themselves was reflected in their style. An occasional seventeenth-century book, reappearing in an eighteenth-century edition, may have continued to enjoy something of popularity; an occasional new book at the very beginning of the period may have retained something of the old picturesqueness. The *Collection of above Three Hundred Receipts* fills its pages with Tansies and Possets, Syllabubs and Flummeries, still recommends a dish as "the best that ever was tasted," and still advises you "to put in a little shalot, if you love it;" The *Queen's Royal Cookery* is as flamboyant with decorative adjectives as any queen's closet. But as time went on, the pleasant old familiarity went out of fashion, and ornament was chastened. The literary tendency of the age was toward more formal dignity, a greater regularity of form. In accordance with the mode, receipts were written with a businesslike decision, a professional directness that allowed no flowers of speech. Many cooks seem to have forestalled or copied Dr. Johnson in the effort to say a thing as pompously as it could be said; disdain of ornament led many to a matter of fact bluntness that is appalling. "Stick your Pig just above the breast-bone," says Mrs. Elizabeth Raffald without any preamble, "run your knife to the heart, when it is dead, put it in cold water." Whoever, after that, would eat of her pig has more courage than I.

Some sort of order was also introduced into the arrangement of receipts, in the place of the haphazard disorder of the old MSS. books. The change was due, in a large measure, to French influence. In France, the art of cookery had reached a much higher stage of perfection than in England. The English might rebel against the fact, and

they did in good earnest. It was not only the Squire of Clod-Hall who

"Classed your Kickshaws and Ragoos
With Popery and Wooden Shoes."

Steele deplored the fashion that banished the "noble Sirloin" ignominiously "to make way for French Kickshaws," and he held a French ragout to be "as pernicious to the Stomach as a glass of spirits." "What work would our countrymen have made at Blenheim and Ramillies, if they had been fed with fricassees and ragouts?" he asks. It was the "parcel of Kickshaws contrived by a French cook" that gave the finishing touch to Matthew Bramble's displeasure with the wife of his friend Baynard. "Their meals are gross," was one of Dr. Johnson's first entries in the Diary of his little Tour in France, proving forever that he was not the "man of very nice discernment in the science of cookery" that Boswell thought him. And, at home, was it not of a certain nobleman's French cook he was heard to say with vehemence, "I'd throw such a rascal into the river"? The English cooks were as outspoken. Mrs. Glasse's Preface is a protest against "the blind Folly of this age that they would rather be imposed on by a French Booby than give encouragement to a good *English* Cook . . . if Gentlemen will have *French* cooks, they must pay for French tricks." E. Smith regretted that in her book she had to include a few French dishes, "since we have, to our disgrace, so fondly admired the French tongue, French modes, and also French messes." Charles Carter lamented that "some of our Nobility and gentry have been too much attached to French Customs and French Cookery," — too willing "to dress even more delicious Fare after the Humour of the (perhaps vitiated) palates of some great Personages or noted Epicures of France." It was the one point upon which all, with a few exceptions, were agreed.

But protests were of small avail. Already, in his Directions to Servants, Swift had found it a long time since the custom began among the people of quality to keep *men* cooks and generally of the French nation. Patriotism, I fear, does not begin in the stomach. French cooks presided in most of the big houses; French cooks were patronized by royalty; French cooks wrote cookery books. The French Family Cook (1793) was but a belated translation of the famous Cuisinière Bourgeoise (1746). La Chapelle, who published a treatise, was a Frenchman. So was Clermont. Verral studied under a Frenchman. And from French sources the most patriotic were not ashamed to steal. Mrs. Smith, however she might object to French messes, must still admit the necessity to temporize, justifying herself by including only "such receipts of French cookery as I think may not be disagreeable to English palates." Mrs. Glasse, however she might scorn the French Booby, must still give some of her dishes "French names to distinguish them, because they are known by those names," and it matters not if they be called French so they are good. The question reduced itself simply to one of demand and supply. But if the "French Kickshaws" had been so bad for the public as patriots preached, the study of French books was altogether good for the preachers. Under the sweet civilizing influence of France the barbarous medley of the English cookery book disappeared. A roast did not turn up unexpectedly between a sweet and a savory, or a fish in the midst of the soups, or an omelet lost among the vegetables. Each dish was duly labeled and entered in its appropriate chapter. Chemical, Physical, and Chirurgical Secrets were banished to separate volumes with a few curious exceptions. "I shall not take upon me to meddle in the physical way farther than two receipts," writes Mrs. Glasse. "One is for the bite of a mad dog, and the other if a

man should be near where the Plague is, he shall be in no danger." And these receipts are so often repeated in rival cookery books that I can only suppose there were many who believed in earnest what Lord Chesterfield said in jest when, six years after Mrs. Glasse's book was published, he wrote to his son that his friend Kreuningen "admits nobody now to his table, for fear of their communicating the plague to him, or at least the bite of a mad dog." But it was no easy matter for the ladies to relinquish their rights to prescribe. If the gentlewoman of the day still

"knew for sprains what bands to choose,
Could tell the sovereign wash to use
For freckles, and was learned in brews
As erst Medea,"

it would not have done for the self-appointed instructors of the sex to be behindhand in these arts. E. Smith cannot resist giving some two hundred receipts "never before been made public," though she has the grace to print them in a section apart. Mrs. Harrison and Mrs. Price both undertake to make "Every man his own Doctor," and in the undertaking Mrs. Price supplies a cure that I quote on the chance of its proving useful, for I fancy the malady continues to be common, so afflicted am I with it myself. "For the Lethargy," she says, "you may snuff strong vinegar up the nose." It was natural at a time when Compendiums, Universal Visitors, Dictionaries of Commerce, and of everything else, were in vogue, that other women took upon themselves also, by means of Dictionaries, and Magazines, and Companions, and Jewels, and Guides, to see their sex comfortably through life "from the cradle to the grave." I have any number of ambitious books of this kind, all based on *The Whole Duty of Woman*, and the performance of Mrs. Hannah Woolley of seventeenth-century fame. Take a few headings of chapters from any one chosen at random, and you have the character of all: Of Religion; The Duty

of Virgins; Of Wives; Of Gravies, Soups, Broths, Pottages. But the system, the careful division of subjects, now become indispensable, is observed even in these compilations.

The new love of order had one drawback. It gave writers less opportunity for self-revelation. I miss the personal note so pleasant in the older books of cookery, that is, in the receipts themselves. One collection is so like another I can hardly tell them apart unless I turn to the title-page or the preface. But here ample amends are made. The cook did not suppress his individuality meekly, and, fortunately for him, the age was one of Prefaces and Dedications. In the few pages where he still could swagger, he made up for the many where the mode forced him to efface himself. "Custom," says John Nott, in 1723, to the "Worthy Dames" to whom he offers his Dictionary, "has made it as unfashionable for a Book to appear without an Introduction, as for a Man to appear at Church without a Neckcloth, or a Lady without a Hoop-petticoat." "It being grown as unfashionable for a Book to appear in public without a Preface, as for a Lady to appear at a Ball without a Hoop-petticoat," says Mrs. Smith in 1727, her great talent being for plagiarism, "I shall conform to custom for Fashion's sake, and not through any Necessity." Mr. Hazlitt thinks Mrs. Smith unusually observant; he should have remembered the library at her disposal, and, had he known this library more intimately, he would have realized how little scruple she had in drawing from it. She only writes because, although already there are "various Books that treat on this subject and which bear great names as *Cooks to Kings*, *Princes and Noblemen*," most of them have deceived her in her expectations, so impracticable, whimsical, or unpalatable, are the receipts. But she presents the result of her own experience "in Fashionable and Noble Families," and if her

book but "prove to the advantage of many, the end will be answered that is proposed by her that is ready to serve the Publick in what she may." Each writer in turn is as eager to find a reason for his or her help in glutting the market. The author of the Collection of above Three Hundred Receipts is prompted by the sole "desire of doing good," in which, fortunately, she has been aided by those "who with a Noble Charity and Universal Benevolence have exposed to the World such invaluable secrets," as, I suppose, "how to stew Cucumbers to eat hot," or "to make the London Wigs," — gratitude, above all, being due to the Fair Sex, "who, it may be because of the greater Tenderness of their Nature or their greater Leisure, are always found most Active and Industrious in this, as well as in all other kinds of Charity. O Heavenly Charity!" — and so on, and so on. William Gelleroy has learnt during service with the Lord Mayor that "so long as it is the fashion to eat, so long will cookery books be useful." Mrs. Elizabeth Price, the healer of Lethargy, thinks it her duty to show the world how to unite "Economy and Elegance," and, as an assurance of her ability, breaks into verse on her title-page: —

"Here you may quickly learn with care
To act the housewife's part,
And dress a modern Bill of Fare
With Elegance and Art."

Mrs. Charlotte Mason knows there are many books, but has "never met with one that contained any instructions for regulating a table." Mrs. Elizabeth Moxon, like the modest author to-day, shifts the responsibility to her "honored friends who first excited her to the publication of her book, and who have been long eye-witnesses of her Skill and Behaviour in the Business of her Calling." Mrs. Elizabeth Raffald, reflecting upon the contempt with which the many volumes already published were read, seems to have hoped no one would find her out if she boldly borrowed from

Mrs. Price and Mrs. Glasse, and tried to save her own from the general fate by uniting "Economy and Elegance," taking the very words out of Mrs. Price's mouth, and by seeing that it was not "glossed over with Hard Names or words of High Stile, but wrote in my own plain language," barely altering Mrs. Glasse's memorable phrase. I select a few specimens of her plain language: "Hares and Rabbits requires time and care," she says, with a cheerful disregard of grammar; "Pigeons Transmogrified" is a term I should recommend to the Century Company for a new edition of their Dictionary; while upon a very popular dish of the day she bestows the name "Solomon-gundy," as if she fancied that, somehow, King Solomon were responsible for it. John Farley hopes his book is distinguished from others by "Perspicuity and Regularity." But I might go on quoting indefinitely, for almost every Preface is a masterpiece of its kind, so pompous in its periods, so bombastic in its eloquence, until I begin to suspect that if Bacon wrote Shakespeare, so Dr. Johnson must have written Nott and Lamb and Clermont and Farley; that if Dr. Hill transformed himself into Hannah Glasse, so Dr. Johnson must have masqueraded as E. Smith, Elizabeth Raffald, and a whole bevy of fair cooks and housekeepers.

There is another trait shared by all these cooks, to whom I should do scant justice if I did not point it out. This is the large liberality with which they practiced their art. The magnitude of their ideas, at times, makes me gasp. I have been often asked if, with such a fine collection to choose from, I do not amuse myself experimenting with the old receipts. But all our flat turned into a kitchen would not be large enough to cook an eighteenth-century dinner, nor our year's income to pay for it. The proportions used in each different dish are gigantic. What Dr. King wrote in jest of the different

cooks who, "to show you the largeness of their soul, prepared you Mutton swol'd¹ and oxen whole," was virtually true. For a simple "Fricassy," you begin with half a dozen chickens, half a dozen pigeons, half a dozen sweetbreads, and I should need a page to explain what you finish with for garniture. Fowls disappeared into a lamb or other meat pie by the dozen; a simple leg of mutton must have its garniture of cutlets; twelve pounds of good meat, to say nothing of odd partridges, fowls, turkeys, and ham, went into the making of one stew, — it is something stupendous to read. And then the endless number of dishes in a menu, — the insufferably crowded table. A century before, Pepys had discovered the superior merit of serving "but a dish at a time" when he gave his fine dinner to Lord Sandwich. But the eighteenth-century books continue to publish menus that make Gargantua's appetite seem mere child's play; their plates "exhibiting the order of placing the different dishes, etc., on the table in the most polite way" would spoil the appetite of the bravest. Forty-three dishes are symmetrically arranged for a single course in one of Vincent La Chapelle's plates, and La Chapelle was a Frenchman, and in England enjoyed Lord Chesterfield's patronage. Cooks may have got so advanced as no longer to believe "that Syllibubs come first and Soups the last," but quantity was still their standard of merit. Authorities may have begun to decree that "three courses be the most." But consider what a course meant. Let me give one menu of two courses as an average example. It is for a July day, and Mrs. Smith is the artist: "First Course: Cock Salmon with buttered lobsters, Dish of Scotch collops, Chine of Veal, Venison pasty, Grand Sallad, Roasted geese and ducklings, Patty royal, Roasted pig larded, Stewed carps, Dish of

¹ "Swol'd Mutton is a sheep roasted in its Wool" according to Dr. Lister himself.

chickens boiled with bacon, etc.," — that etc. is expressive. "Second Course: Dish of partridges and quails, Dish of lobsters and prawns, Dish of ducks and tame pigeons, Dish of jellies, Dish of fruit, Dish of marinated fish, Dish of Tarts of sorts." Add a third course to this if you dare.

At first, this lavishness perplexed me. I remembered eighteenth-century dinners as simple as our own. For example, Boswell's with Dr. Johnson one Easter Sunday, — a very good soup, a boiled leg of lamb and spinach, a veal pie, and rice pudding, — that seems reasonable. Or again, the beef, pudding, and potatoes to which Grub Street was invited on Sundays by the successful author, according to Smollett. Or Stella's breast of mutton and a pint of wine when she dined at home in Dublin. "Two plain dishes, with two or three good-natured, cheerful, ingenious friends," was Steele's idea of a good dinner. But then there is the opposite side of the picture. Dr. Johnson's *Gulosulus*, cultivating the art of living at the cost of others. Swift, in London, sauntering forth of a morning deliberately in search of a dinner at somebody else's house and expense, and if none of the great men with great establishments invited him, dropping in for want of something better, and without a moment's notice, at Mrs. Vanhomrigh's, and he could not have been a more severe critic had he had the special invitation which Dr. Johnson thought made the special menu an obligation. "The worst dinner I ever saw at the dean's was better," Swift wrote to Stella, "than one had at Sir Thomas Mansel's," and "yet this man has ten thousand pounds a year and is a Lord of the Treasury!" At the Earl of Abingdon's, on a certain Ash Wednesday, there was nothing but fish that was raw, wine that was poison, candles that were tallow; and yet "the puppy has twelve thousand pounds a year," though I do not find that Swift went the length

of calling his host puppy in print, more outspoken as he was than most of his contemporaries. Swift was but one of a large crowd of hungry men in search of a free dinner which they looked upon as their right. By food the noble Lord tamed his authors and secured his sycophants; by food the gracious Lady ruled her salon. "Whenever you meet with a man eminent in any way, feed him, and feed upon him at the same time," was Lord Chesterfield's advice to his son. Mrs. Thrale had but to provide sweetmeats to make her evenings a success, Dr. Johnson thought. Nor, for that matter, has the bait lost its cunning in the London of to-day. Now the eighteenth-century cook who wrote books was a snob. He would always have you know it was with the Tables of Princes, Ambassadors, Noblemen, and Magistrates he was concerned; but rarely would he devise "the least expensive methods of providing for private families," and then it must be "in a very elegant manner." He had, therefore, to design on a large scale, to adapt his art to the number and hunger and fastidiousness of the hanger-on. And here, I think, you have the explanation.

But another problem I have hitherto been unable to solve. When I study the receipts of the period, I am struck by their variety and excellence. The tendency to over-seasoning, to the mixing of sweets and savories in one dish, had not altogether been overcome; probably, I am afraid, because fresh meat was not always to be had, and suspicious flavors had to be disguised. Some "made dishes" you know, without tasting them, to be as "wretched attempts" as MacLaurin's seemed to Dr. Johnson. However, so many and ingenious were the ways of preparing soups, sauces, meats, poultry, game, fish, vegetables, and sweets, the *gourmet* had sufficient chance to steer clear of the tawdry and the crude. Only in Voltaire's witticism was England then a country of a hundred religions and one sauce. Soup

soared above the narrow oxtail and turtle ideal, and the cook roamed at will from the richest bisque to the simplest bouillon. The *casserole* was exalted and shared the honors with the honest spit. Fricassee and ragouts were not yet overshadowed by plain roast and boiled. Vegetables were not thought, when unadorned, to be adorned the most. And as for oysters, an American could not have been more accomplished in frying, scalloping, stewing, roasting, broiling, and boiling them,—even Swift gave his dear little M. D. a receipt for boiled oysters, which must have been not unlike that delicious dish of mussels one has eaten in many a French provincial hotel. And what is England to-day? A country soupless and sauceless, consecrated to a "Chop or a Steak, sir!" from John o' Groat's to Land's End, vowed irrevocably to boiled potatoes and greens, without as much as a grain of salt to flavor them. How did it happen? What was the reason of the Decline and Fall? Not Tatler's appeal to his fellow countrymen to "return to the food of their forefathers, and reconcile themselves to beef and mutton." That was uttered in 1710, and had absolutely no effect upon the tendency of the eighteenth-century cookery books that followed. As for "the common people of this kingdom [who] do still keep up the taste of their ancestors," never yet have they set the fashion. I confess, I still remain in outer darkness, groping for a clue.

If, as a rule, the eighteenth-century books, save for their preface, have a strong family resemblance, I prize the more the small but select saving remnant that makes for individuality. There are books that stand out with distinction, in my estimate at least, because of the originality of the title: for instance, Adam's *Luxury* and Eve's *Cookery*; or the *Kitchen Garden Displayed*. (Printed for R. Dodsley in Pall Mall, 1744.) This octavo I saw first in the Patent Library collection of

cookery books, never resting afterwards until I had secured a copy of my own, and the contents would have to be more colorless than they are to spoil my pleasure in the name. Now the charm is in the illustrations; for example, *The Honours of the Table or Rules for Behaviour during meals* (by the author of *Principles of Politeness*, 1791). Most of the cookery books of the period are content with the frontispiece, engraved on copper or steel. But this little book has tail-pieces and illustrations scattered through the text, described in catalogues and bibliographies as "Woodcuts by Bewick." I saw it also first at the Patent Library, and before the ardor of my pursuit had cooled to the investigation point, two different editions had a place on my shelves: one printed in London at the Literary Press, 1791, the second printed in Dublin in the same year. Then I found that the wood engravings — it is a mistake to call them woodcuts, and one might as well be pedantic in these matters — are not by Thomas but by John Bewick, which makes a difference to the collector. But then Bewick's brother is not to be despised, and the book is full of useful hints, such as "eating a great deal is deemed indelicate in a lady (for her character should be rather divine than sensual);" or, "if any of the company seem backward in asking for wine, it is the part of the master to ask or invite them to drink, or he will be thought to grudge his liquor." A few books please me because of the tribute their learning pays to the kitchen. Among these the most celebrated is Dr. Lister's edition of *Apicius Caelius*, published in 1705, now a rare book, at the time a bomb-shell in the camp of the antiquary, who, living in the country and hearing of it but not yet seeing it, was reduced to such "perplexity of mind" that "he durst not put any Catchup in his Fish Sauce, nor have his beloved Pepper, Oyl and Limon with his Partridge," lest "he might transgress in using

something not common to the Antients." Another is *The Art of Cookery* (1708), in imitation of Horace, by the Dr. King who was described, two years later, by Swift to Stella as "a poor starving wit." And, indeed, the £32 5 0, said to have been paid him for the poem by Lintot, could not have tided him over his difficulties as a thirsty man. It is rather a ponderous performance, with here and there flashes: probably the verses were some of those Pope said he would write "in a tavern three hours after he could not speak." The book was a skit really on Dr. Lister and his *Apicius Caelius* that, for the moment, served the wit as a target for his ridicule.

But, of all, the books I love most are those that make their appeal by some unexpected literary association. I own to a genuine emotion when I found it was to Lord Chesterfield that Vincent La Chapelle dedicated *The Modern Cook*, and that to the chef in his kitchen the noble patron offered the helping hand he later refused to the author at his door. I cannot understand why, for La Chapelle, in his praise of his lordship's exalted qualities, did not humble himself more completely than Johnson when overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of his lordship's address. In *The Gentle Art of Toadying*, the author of the eighteenth century could instruct the cook. It was, however, reserved for William Verral to give me the greatest thrill. His *Complete System of Cookery* is little known even to bibliographers; its receipts do not seem exceptional, perhaps because they have been so freely borrowed by other compilers; in make-up the book scarcely differs from the average, nor is there special distinction in Verral's post at the time of his writing, — he was master of the White Hart Inn, Lewes, Sussex; "no more than what is vulgarly called a poor publican" is his description of himself. But his title-page at the first glance was worth more to me

than a whole shelf of his contemporaries' big fat volumes. Let me explain. By no great man in the annals of cookery have I been so puzzled as by that once famous "Chloe," French cook to the Duke of Newcastle, and important enough in his own generation to swagger for a minute in the Letters of Horace Walpole and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. I had heard of Chloe, the beloved of Daphnis; I had heard of Chloe, the rival of Steele's Clarissa; I had even heard of Chloe, the old darky cook of the South. But of Chloe, a Frenchman, I had never heard, and I knew, without consulting the Encyclopædia, he simply could not exist. Who, then, was the Duke of Newcastle's Chloe? He was the last person I had in my mind when I began to read Verral's title, but by the time I got to the end I understood: A Complete System of Cookery, In which is set forth a Variety of genuine Receipts; collected from several Years' Experience under the celebrated Mr. de St. Clouet, sometimes since Cook to his Grace, the Duke of Newcastle. Clouet — Chloe — is it not as near and neat a guess as could be hoped for in the French of eighteenth-century London? He deserves his fame, for his receipts are excellent; wisdom in all he says about soup; genius in his use of garlic. Verral, moreover, writes an Introductory Preface, a graceful bit of autobiography, "to which is added, a true character of Mons. de St. Clouet;" so well done that there is scarcely a cook in history, not Vatel, not Carême, whom I now feel I know better. "An honest man," Verral testifies, "worthy of the place he enjoyed in that noble family he had the honour to live in," not extravagant as was said, but "setting aside the two soups, fish, and about five *gros entrées* (as the French call them) he has with the help of a couple of rabbits or chickens, and six pigeons, completed a table of twenty-one dishes at a course, with

such things as used to serve only for garnish round a lump of great heavy dishes before he came." Fortunately for the Duke of Newcastle's purse St. Clouet must still have been with him for the famous banquets celebrating his installation as Chancellor at Cambridge, when, according to Walpole, his cooks for ten days massacred and confounded "all the species that Noah and Moses took such pains to preserve and distinguish," and, according to Gray, every one "was very owlsh and tipsy at night." This was in 1749; 1759 is the date of Verral's book, by which time St. Clouet had become cook to the Maréchal de Richelieu. I think it but due to him to recall that he was "of a temper so affable and agreeable as to make everybody happy around him. He would converse about indifferent matters with me (Verral) or his kitchen boy, and the next moment, by a sweet turn in his discourse, give pleasure by his good behaviour and genteel deportment, to the first steward in the family. His conversation is always modest enough, and having read a little, he never wanted something to say, let the topick be what it would." How delightful if cooks to-day brought us such graceful testimonials!

It is with discoveries of this kind my Cookery Books reward me for the time — and worse, the money — I spend upon them. I never pick up one already in my collection, well as I may know it, without wondering what puzzle it will unravel for me; I never buy a new one without seeing in it the possible key to a mystery. And when I consider how much more fruitful in such rewards my eighteenth-century books have been than my seventeenth, when I consider the splendor of their mock heroics, the magnificence of their bombast, I waver in my old allegiance and begin to think that, after all, this is the period that charms me most in the Literature of the Kitchen.

Elizabeth Robins Pennell.

THE MOONSHINER AT HOME.

AT first the forestry camp was looked upon with suspicion by the mountaineers, for they knew the foresters were in some way connected with the government, and the government it is whose officials collect revenue and arrest men who make whiskey without paying it. There was something mysterious, too, in these men who went about through the woods measuring trees and making marks in little blank books. This might be some new scheme of the "revenues" to entrap the unwary among the moonshining population. Then the real purpose of government forestry began to dawn upon the mountain people, and we were able to see behind the veil and catch glimpses of the moonshiner's inner life.

It was one day just after our removal to a new camp on the roaring Ocoee, near Little Frog Mountain, in the southeasternmost county of Tennessee, that our guide became communicative as to the chief interest of this mountain region. We had climbed to the top of Panther Knob to study the topography of the region, when the old man, pointing across the unbroken stretch of tree-tops to a cove through which rushed a stony mountain stream, said:—

"See that bunch of poplar tops? That's where they got my brother Silas when they sent him to the penitentiary."

The remark was made as indifferently as though the guide were pointing out the place where a deer had been killed or a bee tree cut. There was no apparent evidence of a sense of shame, and none of the assumed indifference of many offenders who affect to despise the hand of authority. I was surprised, and the surprise continued until I had received similar confidences from a number of sources, and knew that going to the penitentiary for moonshining is considered no disgrace.

The guide paused as if expecting the conversation would be continued. So, adopting the mountain phrase, I asked, —

"Was he 'stillin' '?"

"Yes."

There was another pause. Then the old man went on, speaking slowly, in a manner so simple and straightforward as to be almost childlike:—

"They caught him when he was runnin' off his first batch, and hit never done him a bit of good. Silas always did have powerful hard luck. He got sent to the penitentiary that time for a year. When he got out hit was n't more 'n a month till they had him again. Hit would n't been so bad if he'd made something out of hit. When he got caught again I told him if I was in his place I'd never go near another 'still.'"

Then, in the same slow, quiet way, he went on to tell of Silas's first arrest, and the origin of a mountain feud which brought hatred and bloodshed to East Tennessee, and which will one day end in a battle. The story of Dave Payne's capture and confession was told two years ago in the dailies, but not the troubles that led up to it.

"Silas and Milos Wood had been makin' a 'still' in that 'ere cove, and Dave Payne wanted to go in with 'em. They had n't any use for another man, and they told Dave so. Dave had been 'stillin'' over on the other side, but he'd decided to turn revenue, and was expectin' his commission then. Hit must have come about the time Silas got his 'still' goin', for he was drawin' off his first batch, and had his back to the door when he heard some one yell. He looked 'round and there was Dave Payne with a shotgun pointin' at Silas's head. Of course Silas surrendered. Then Dave went down to the Wood

place and got Milos. Milos paid his fine and got out, but Silas went to the penitentiary for a year.

"There was powerful hard feelin's agin Dave after that. He got mad at his own uncle Bill and tried to have him arrested. Milos Wood told him he wanted him to keep to the other side of the road when he went past his place, and not to come breshin' up agin his palin's. This made Dave mad. The next time he got drunk he went right up to Milos's place and shot him through the heart. Old man Wood come to the door and Dave shot him, too."

The story of Dave Payne's capture is old. It came about through the fact that the mountain people, despising one of their fellows who "turns revenue," made up a posse and assisted in the search. Dave stayed quietly in jail until spring when he broke out. Then came commotion in the mountains. Those who had assisted in the search got out their rifles and still carry them. One or two of Dave's relatives turned against him, but the rest remained true. Now the two parties watch each other like opposing armies. Some day when too much moonshine has been imbibed there will be a quarrel. Then rifles will crack, and when the echoes have died away there will be more deaths to avenge and new scores to wipe off the mountain slates.

I started out one afternoon to visit the scene of Silas's capture, and the journey gave me considerable insight into moonshine methods. Up the river trail some three miles from camp is one of those rushing mountain streams which rise in the timbered coves of the Unakas. It came roaring from the rocky woods, and knew no sunlight for the boughs of laurel and rhododendron intertwining in solid mass above. There was no path upon the bank, but one could make his way up the course by stepping from stone to stone on the stream's bottom. Half a mile of such travel and I came to a little low log building. A part of

the roof had fallen in, but the furnace, made of flat slate stones, was intact. So was the trough, which led to a point some few rods up the run and brought down a stream of clear, cold mountain water, for use in the distilling. The barrels, or rather gums, for holding malt and beer, still stood about. Against one leaned the old mash stick with which the brewing liquid was stirred. With no trail save the bed of the stream, the only method of transporting hither the meal was to pack it on the shoulder. When one pictures to himself two men, bent half double with loads of meal, plodding up the rocky stream-bed, plodding down again after nights of labor with the liquid product, always watched and always watching, the pathetic smallness of the whole offense comes over him. And if he live for a time among these poor but generous mountain folk, he is very likely to go forth with a new sympathy, — almost a fellow feeling for them. I believe every one in the forestry camp felt, before the sojourn in East Tennessee was over, a sort of subconscious antipathy to revenue officials; and I doubt not that every one, when he hears of captures and killings in this bit of the mountains, will be suddenly conscious that his involuntary sympathies are with the outlaws.

Stories are numerous of revenue men who met death at the hands of the moonshiners. One hears also tales of innocent strangers, shot because their urban appearance suggested the revenue man. But in all these mountains we could learn of no such occurrence. On the other hand, the instances of captures and tales of fights tended rather to show the general harmlessness of the distiller save when in local troubles he fights his fellow mountaineer.

Before making this camp on the Ocoee we had been warned to look out for Garret Heddon, whose career has been exploited in the daily papers, and who is looked upon by both officials and

mountaineers as a bad man. His name first came before the criminal world when he went across into Alabama, quarreled with a negro about a boat, and throwing the black man into the river, held him there till he was dead. For this Heddon served a term in the Alabama penitentiary. Returning to Tennessee, he was twice arrested for moonshining, but each time the evidence needed to convict was wanting. Then came the deed which made him feared among the mountains. I have the story from a nephew of Heddon; also from his best friend, to whom he made a full statement. I have it, too, from an ex-sheriff who investigated the case. Going to the house, he was met by Heddon who, hospitable even in strenuous times, pointed his rifle at the officer and asked him to sit down to dinner. The officer accepted the invitation, and later, with the rifle still pointing in his direction, went away without attempting to make an arrest.

Garret Heddon and his brothers, Reilly and Bill, and half a dozen other mountaineers, were at work in one of the little valleys. They had spent the greater part of the day splitting shingles, while moonshine flowed freely. Half drunk, Bill Heddon became quarrelsome. He was a hard man to get along with at his best, and now he was looking for trouble in a way that promised to end disastrously. He started to quarrel with Garret's best friend. Garret told him to stop. Bill paid no attention, but grabbed his opponent around the neck and drew his knife. The knife was not far from the man's throat when Garret's rifle cracked and Bill dropped dead.

Man killing in the mountains is common, but fratricide is not, and from that time on Garret Heddon was looked upon as a dangerous man. This impression went out into the settlements, and when, some weeks later, seven revenue men stole into the neighborhood to arrest Reilly Heddon for making moonshine

whiskey, they were ready to shoot Garret at sight.

Gus Heddon told me the story.

"I was in the 'still' house," said he, "and I had n't no idee the revenues was anywhere 'round. I was stoopin' over a barrel of mash when some one said, 'Throw up your hands.' I looked 'round and there was the revenues pointin' their guns at me. I saw they done had me, so I give up. Then I looked up and saw Silas comin' up the trail with a bag of meal. I yelled at him to run. That made the revenues mad, and they said if I did n't shut up they'd kill me. Silas did n't have sense enough to run, and come right down, so they got him. Then they marched us down to Reilly's house, and got Reilly and his brother-in-law. They had us all handcuffed out in front of the house when some one yelled that Garret was comin'. I looked up, and sure enough there did come Garret ridin' a mule, with a Winchester across the saddle. The revenues was powerful 'fraid of Garret because since his trouble over Bill he says he never will give up, and everybody knows he means it. They thought when they saw him comin' that he meant to kill some one. Reilly was handcuffed to one of the revenues, and the revenue was so badly scared he tried to kill Reilly with his shotgun. He shot two shoots, holdin' the gun in his right hand. Reilly pushed the barrel away, and the shoots went into the ground. Then the revenues jumped into the house and behind the corner, and begun to shoot at Garret. They shot seven or eight shoots before he moved. Then he slid off his mule and laid down behind a log.

"The revenues threatened to kill us if we did n't go out and get Garret to go away. We told 'em we could n't do nothin' with Garret. So we all laid there behind the house, and Garret laid behind his log with his Winchester scarin' the revenues powerful nigh into fits. When it got too dark to see they took us and sneaked out."

As a result of this skirmish Heddon's name was more than ever feared. Reilly was sent to the penitentiary for one year; Gus, who had never been in court before, got merely four months in jail, while the two other men were given short terms for assisting an unlawful enterprise.

We had been warned against venturing into the Heddon settlement, but as the dime novel idea of moonshiners wore off, we were all more or less ashamed of our first fears. Dressed one day in garments that gave no opportunity for concealing weapons, and which, therefore, obviated any danger of being mistaken for a revenue official, I threw a camera across my back and started for the neighborhood. One trail, half foot-path, half wagon road, led to the settlement, but to reach it I would have to go far down the river. So, following the directions of our guide, I traveled a half marked path which led first along the bank of a mountain stream, up the mountain side, and along a hard-wood covered ridge. Then crossing a valley and another hill, I saw beyond an opening in the forest. It was a strange little clearing on the hillsides. The whole might be compared to the inside of an inverted pyramid. The steep sides were cleared fields, while in the apex stood a log house and a cornerib beside a cold gushing spring, whose waters formed a rivulet, and flowed away through a cleft where one corner of the pyramid had been cut away. It was a desolate place in every sense, and in the poverty of its windowless cabin and bleak outlook I could see excuse for almost any occupation that would give a few dollars to buy clothing and ammunition.

A path led down to the cabin. Dogs barked at my approach, and a face wreathed in masses of black unkempt hair was extended fearfully from behind the door casing. Then the body appeared, and a barefoot, hungry-looking girl of eleven years stood in the doorway. Several smaller children followed.

"Will you tell me who lives here?" I asked.

"Reilly Heddon lives here when he's at home," came the reply in quick accents. "But he ain't here now. He's in the penitentiary. He's my daddy."

"Do you care if I take a picture of the house?"

"Mammy ain't got no money to pay fur it. We live pretty hard since daddy got caught. There comes mammy, now."

A woman approached. Her feet and head were bare. She had a hoe in her hand, and came from hoeing corn on the hillside. Her hair was black, and her jet black eyes had a fierce intelligence in them. Had it not been for a haggard, worried look, the face would have been a handsome one. Like most mountain people, she was talkative, and told of her husband's arrest, of the fight, and of the various circumstances attending his conviction. Through the story ran the characteristic mountain frankness. There was no thought of shame or disgrace in her husband's imprisonment. It was a mere matter of course that a man who "stills" will some time fall prey to the "revenues," and a conviction is merely a misfortune comparable to the capture of a soldier in war-time.

Once a shade of suspicion seemed to flash across the woman's mind. I had seen a little oven-like arrangement of stone some five feet square by four high, and thinking it might be an interesting feature of mountain life, asked what it was.

"Oh, that's just a drier. I dry fruit in it. I tell folks hit's my 'still' house, and some of them comes powerful nigh to believin' hit; but hit ain't. Hit's just a drier my husband made before he went to the penitentiary."

I asked the way to Garret Heddon's, and following down the creek through the missing corner of the pyramid, I passed the place where Bill Heddon met his death, and winding with the trail

to the top of a ridge, came to another little clearing set down in the prevailing woods. There, squatting beside a mountain stream, was a log cabin as old and picturesque as any in this part of Tennessee. This is the home of Garret Heddon, a man feared by revenue officials and mountaineers alike, yet loved, too, by the latter, for, as they say, he is "clever," and will do anything in the world for a friend, a fact which was emphasized when his defense of a comrade made him a fratricide. Yet these very same men who would fight for him have a way of shaking their heads and saying that if Garret Heddon became their enemy they would move out of the country "powerful quick."

I wanted to meet Heddon, so I climbed the fence which separates woods from clearing. Instantly three savage-looking hounds set up a baying and started toward me. At the same time a man's haggard face appeared at a loophole in the wall.

"What d'ye want?" roared a voice.

"Call off your dogs. I want to know the way to the forestry camp."

"Follow right along that 'ere trail till you come to the river," roared the voice again.

"I want to take a picture of your house. May I?"

"A what? A picture?"

"Yes."

"Do you take pictures?"

"Yes."

"Will you take a picture of my little boy?"

"Sure!"

"Then I reckon you'd better come in."

The dogs, that had stood like a firing squad awaiting orders to execute the condemned, were called back. The man with the haggard face met me at the door.

"Come right in and take a cheer. The woman's out in the field, but she'll be back after a bit to fix the boy up. Reckon you ain't in no hurry."

He was some six feet tall, but his shoulders stooped, and he looked less the mountain bad man than the broken-down farmer. His hair had been coal black, but plentiful white streaks were making their advent. Apparently it had not been combed for days, for it stuck out in mats and tangles from under the edges of a frayed and ragged black felt hat. His beard was short and scrubby, grizzled like his hair. His eyes were bluish gray, and when he spoke there was a look in them which I have seen in the eyes of more than one politician, — a look which says, "I know you and you know me, and you know I'm telling things which are not true because it is part of my business to do so." Much frayed suspenders, fastened by nails, held up a pair of threadbare black trousers. A dark calico shirt hung open in front displaying a sun-browned chest. When the man walked, it was with a decided limp, the result of wearing manacles in an Alabama chain gang.

The cabin had one room. At the end was an immense stone fireplace, and on either side of this a loophole or window some six by eight inches in area. There were no other windows than these, and there was about the whole interior a gloominess which might prove disconcerting to an official coming suddenly in from the sunny outside. A table rested against one wall, and over this was a shelf on which stood half a dozen quart bottles, some tin cans, and a few dishes. In the end opposite the fireplace were two beds. At the head of one stood a brace of repeating rifles, a Marlin and a Winchester, so placed as to be within easy reach of the sleeper. The walls were as bare as the floor save for the wings and tails of some half-dozen wild turkeys which hung from nails and pegs.

My host sat down between me and the rifles.

"Powerful glad to have you come along," he began. "I've been want-

in' for a right smart time to have a picture of my boy, but I don't jest like to go out to town to get it. There comes the woman. She 'll be gettin' dinner. Take your cheer with you and let's go out under the trees."

I stepped outside and sat down under an oak that stood beside the creek. Heddon followed with a chair in one hand and his Winchester in the other.

"I reckoned maybe you'd like to see my Winchester," said he, and the twinkle in his eyes became more distinct. "That's the best Winchester I ever saw. I killed all them turkeys with it. The sights was n't good when I got it, but I took it to town and had that piece of silver put on in front. That's bright enough so I can draw down fine. Jest look at it." He handed me the gun, but that was the farthest it got from his hand. While we talked in the shade it lay across his knees. When we sat down to dinner it stood against the wall at his right hand.

Now a haggard-faced woman came along the trail with four children at her heels. The youngest was a toddling boy of two years. This was the father's favorite, the one whose picture was to be taken. A few minutes later a smooth-faced, good-looking young mountaineer came from the other way. This was Gus Heddon, Garret's nephew.

"Got any dram in camp?" asked my host, when the children had gone by. The term was new and I hesitated.

"Drink, I mean!"

"No. There does not seem to be any one that sells it around here."

"Maybe I've got a little in the house. I don't know. Reckon maybe there's enough for a drink."

He limped to the house and brought out a quart bottle.

"That's good whiskey," I said.

"Maybe I can get some more." Now the eyes sparkled and shone.

"Here, Gus," he called. "Jump on the mule and see if you can't find us some more dram. Here's some money

to pay for it," and drawing a purse from his pocket he offered the young man a silver coin. All this time his eyes were saying, "This is for appearances, but of course we both understand."

"Tell you what," he said, turning to me. "If you all can't get nothin' to drink, maybe I can help you. Now, I don't have nothin' to do with whiskey myself, except to drink it up, but I guess maybe I can help you get a little. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll come over to camp some night a little late."

Not wanting to outstay my welcome I asked if the boy might not be ready for his picture.

"Reckon we'll have somethin' to eat before you take that," said he. "We live pretty hard up here, but I reckon you can eat one meal of our grub if we live on it all the time."

We had for dinner hot corn bread, bacon, fresh pork, coffee, young onions, and black honey. The honey was from a bee tree, the pork the flesh of a wild mountain hog, fattened, I doubt not, on refuse from the "still." There was but one table knife. That came to me. Garret and Gus ate with their jackknives, and when my host finished eating, he wiped each side of the blade on his trousers leg, and then closing it put it back into his pocket. Gus and I had saucers for our coffee cups, but the rest had none. There was no sugar for the coffee and no butter for the bread.

The conversation turned to guns.

"Reckon you've seen these rifles that shoot steel bullets?" asked Garret. "Well, I ain't got no use for them. Had seven men shootin' at me with 'em one day 'bout a year ago, and they never touched me."

"How was that?" I asked.

Then followed an account of the fight at Reilly's house. Garret said he had been riding past on his way to the river, when, before he saw them, the men be-

gan shooting at him. He told the story much as Gus had told it. There was no bragging of his own part in the affair, and the whole tone of the narrative smacked more of a great joke on the "revenues" than of a feat creditable to himself.

"Why did n't you shoot back?" I ventured.

"Reckoned it was n't much use," said he. "I could n't see 'em because they got behind the house and cornerib. And then I knew that if I went to shootin' for luck they'd kill the boys they had handcuffed. So I jest laid behind the log with my Winchester and kep' 'em scared."

"Reilly ain't havin' such a powerful hard time in the penitentiary. He can't eat what they give 'em there, so they let him buy whatever grub he wants. We send him money to do it. I send him five dollars a month, and the old man sends him a little. He says he weighs thirty pounds more than he did when he went. But he did hate powerful to go."

Dinner over, the four children were taken out to be photographed. There was a pretty little girl of ten, two quiet boys of six and eight, besides the two year old favorite. This spoiled child refused to have his face washed.

"Let him come without washin'," said the father. "You see we can't make him do anything. He's the worst little skunk you ever saw. When he gets mad at anybody he'll take a knife and say, 'I'll cut your neck.' I lick all of 'em but him. I want to see how he'll come out and grow up without lickin'."

Why is this boy the favored child of his father? May there not be in the baby that takes a knife and, toddling across the floor, threatens to cut his sister's "neck" the same wild instinct which led the father to shoot his brother and drown his enemy? Perhaps this common instinct is the subtle link of sympathy between father and boy.

There are strange things in human nature. One of these is the development of a man who really does what the rest of us would like to do in our worst moments, but which we do not, a man whose finger is steady on the trigger when a touch means murder, and whose unimaginative eye does not see the awful consequences in time to check the criminal impulse. Garret Heddon is such a man. In his neighborhood are other men who have killed their fellows, but they fear to quarrel with Garret Heddon because, as they all say, "he'll do jest what he says he'll do, no matter if he has to kill his whole family."

Pathetic in the extreme is the outlook for these children. They must spend their childhood in the midst of alarms. Their father's hand is ever near a rifle. His eye is always on the trail. Some day he will walk out of the cabin never to come back. If he is the man his neighbors believe, he will die with a smoking rifle in his hands and the lust of battle in his heart.

But, however he may die, his children grow up to carry weapons and distill forbidden liquors. The gospel of their people teaches them to hate the revenue man as their natural enemy. There will come years of work in hidden mountain distilleries, arrests, prison walls, battles, murders, and who can tell what else? Yet through it all they will be following the precepts that came to them in the cradle, — living the best life they know.

My host said he would show me the way to camp, but before we started he took out his pocketbook and asked how much he should pay me for the pictures. When I declined to accept money a pained look came into his eyes, and he said, —

"I want to pay. We live pretty hard up here, but we can pay what we owe."

I explained that since I was not taking pictures for money I would no sooner allow him to pay for a photograph of his

children than he would allow me to pay for my dinner.

Now he was satisfied, and going into the house, brought out the beard of a wild turkey.

"Reckon you don't have many turkeys like that up North. That beard came off of the biggest gobbler I ever saw. Won't you take it along?"

I was pleased to accept the gift, for the beard would make a pretty trophy for the wall of a far-off den. Then I asked if I might not take my host's picture.

"No," said he with emphasis. "I don't let anybody take mine." For reasons which seemed sufficient I did not insist.

Then he spoke a few words with Gus. The latter went into the house, and from a bin in the loft took down a sack

of corn. This he shouldered, and then started down a side trail toward a mill, — a little water mill with a capacity of some dozen bushels a day. I could mentally follow that corn from the drying place in the loft to the mill, and thence to the distillery. Now Garret threw the Winchester over his shoulder and said, —

"I'll show you the way to camp."

We went down the stream, climbed the ridge, and walked to a point where our path branched.

"That trail will take you to camp," he said. "Reckon I'd better not go any farther. Remember, I'm comin' over to camp one of these nights a little late."

When I looked back from the bottom of the ridge he still stood leaning on his rifle at the forks of the trail.

Leonidas Hubbard, Jr.

THE SHORT STORY.

THE initial difficulty in discussing the Short Story is that old danger of taking one's subject either too seriously or else not seriously enough. If one could but hit upon the proper key, at the outset, one might possibly hope to edify the strenuous reader and at the same time to propitiate the frivolous. Let us make certain of our key, therefore, by promptly borrowing one! And we will take our hint as to the real nature of the short story from that indisputable master of the long story, Thackeray. In his Roundabout Paper On a Lazy Idle Boy there is a picture, all in six lines, of "a score of white-bearded, white-robed warriors, or grave seniors of the city, seated at the gate of Jaffa or Beyrout, and listening to the story-teller reciting his marvels out of The Arabian Nights." That picture, symbol as it was to Thackeray of the story-teller's rôle, may well hover in

the background of one's memory as he discourses of the short story as a form of literary art.

Is it a distinct form, with laws and potencies that differentiate it sharply from other types of literature? This question is a sort of turnstile, through which one must wriggle, or over which one must boldly leap, in order to reach our field of investigation. Some of the Atlantic's readers are familiar with a magazine article written many years ago by Mr. Brander Matthews, entitled *The Philosophy of the Short-story*, and recently revised and issued as a little volume.¹ It will be observed that Professor Matthews spells Short-story with a hyphen, and claims that the Short-story, hyphenated, is something very different from a story that merely hap-

¹ *The Philosophy of the Short-story.* By BRANDER MATTHEWS, D. C. L. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1901.

pens to be short. It is, he believes, a distinct species; an art-form by itself; a new literary *genre*, in short, characterized by compression, originality, ingenuity, a touch of fantasy, and by the fact that no love interest is needed to hold its parts together. Mr. Matthews gives pertinent illustrations of these characteristics, and comments in interesting fashion upon recent British and American examples of the Short-story. But one is tempted to ask if the white-bearded, white-robed warriors at the gate of Jaffa were not listening, centuries and centuries ago, to tales marked by compression, originality, ingenuity, a touch of fantasy, and all the other "notes" of this new type of literature.

The critical trail blazed so plainly by the professor of dramatic literature at Columbia has been followed by several authors of recent volumes devoted to the art of short story writing. Dr. Nettleton's *Specimens of the Short Story*¹ is a carefully edited little book containing eight examples of different phases of narrative art. Lamb's *The Superannuated Man* illustrates the Sketch; Irving's *Rip van Winkle*, the Tale; Hawthorne's *The Great Stone Face*, the Allegory; Poe's *The Purloined Letter*, the Detective Story; Thackeray's *Phil Fogarty*, the Burlesque; Dickens's *Dr. Manette's Manuscript*, the Story of Incident; Bret Harte's *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, the Local Color Story, and Stevenson's *Markheim*, the Psychological Story. The range of another new volume is still wider, as may be inferred from its title,² *The World's Greatest Short Stories*. It is edited by Sherwin Cody, who published some years ago an anonymous treatise on *The Art of Short Story Writing*. Mr. Cody prints, with brief

expository introductions, stories from Boccaccio, *The Arabian Nights*, Irving, Balzac, Dickens, Thackeray, Poe, Hawthorne, Maupassant, Mr. Kipling, Mr. Barrie, and Mr. Arthur Morrison. And there has lately been issued still another handbook, entitled *Short Story Writing*.³ Like the preceding volume, it was conceived in Chicago, and its breezy, wholesome Philistinism is tempered with reverent quotation from Mr. Brander Matthews, Poe, and Munsey's *Magazine*, and with much useful information for the benefit of the young author. The Introduction begins with this extraordinary statement: "The short story was first recognized as a distinct class of literature in 1842, when Poe's criticism of Hawthorne called attention to the new form of fiction." But story-telling, surely, is as old as the day when men first gathered round a camp-fire, or women huddled in a cave! The study of comparative folk-lore is teaching us every day how universal is the instinct for it. Even were we to leave out of view the literature of oral tradition, and take the earlier written literature of any European people, for instance, the tales told by Chaucer and some of his Italian models, we should find these modern characteristics of "originality," "ingenuity," and the rest in almost unrivaled perfection, and perhaps come to the conclusion of Chaucer himself, as he exclaims in whimsical despair, "There is no new thing that is not old!"

And yet if the question be put point-blank, "Do not such short story writers as Stevenson, Mr. Kipling, Miss Jewett, Bret Harte, Daudet — not to mention Poe and Hawthorne — stand for a new movement, a distinct type of literature?" one is bound to answer

¹ *Specimens of the Short Story*. Edited with Introductions and Notes, by GEORGE HENRY NETTLETON, Ph. D. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1901.

² *Selections from The World's Greatest Short*

Stories. By SHERWIN CODY. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. 1902.

³ *Short Story Writing*. A Practical Treatise on the Art of the Short Story. By CHARLES RAYMOND BARRETT, Ph. B. New York: The Baker and Taylor Co.

"Yes." Here is work that contrasts very strongly, not only with the Italian *novella* and other mediæval types, but even with the English and American tales of two generations ago. Where lies the difference? For Professor Brander Matthews and his Chicago disciples are surely right in holding that there is a difference. It is safer to trace it, however, not in the external characteristics of this modern work, every single feature of which can easily be paralleled in prehistoric myths, but rather — as Mr. Cody, indeed, seems in part to do — in the attitude of the contemporary short story writer toward his material, and in his conscious effort to achieve under certain conditions a certain effect. And it is true that no one has defined this conscious attitude and aim so clearly as Edgar Allan Poe.

In that perpetually quoted essay upon Hawthorne's *Tales* written in 1842 — one of the earliest and to this day one of the best criticisms of Hawthorne — Poe remarks: —

"Were I bidden to say how the highest genius could be most advantageously employed for the best display of its own powers, I should answer, without hesitation — in the composition of a rhymed poem, not to exceed in length what might be perused in an hour. Within this limit alone can the highest order of true poetry exist. I need only here say, upon this topic, that, in almost all classes of composition, the unity of effect or impression is a point of the greatest importance. It is clear, moreover, that this unity cannot be thoroughly preserved in productions whose perusal cannot be completed at one sitting. We may continue the reading of a prose composition, from the very nature of prose itself, much longer than we can persevere, to any good purpose, in the perusal of a poem. This latter, if truly fulfilling the demands of the poetic sentiment, induces an exaltation of the soul which cannot be long sustained. All high excitements are ne-

cessarily transient. Thus a long poem is a paradox. And without unity of impression the deepest effects cannot be brought about. . . .

"Were I called upon, however, to designate that class of composition which, next to such a poem as I have suggested, should best fulfill the demands of high genius — should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion — I should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale, as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. I allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from totality. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences — resulting from weariness or interruption.

"A skillful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents, — he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at

length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed; and this is an end unattainable by the novel."

If we assent to Poe's reasoning we are at once upon firm ground. The short story in prose literature corresponds, then, to the lyric in poetry; like the lyric, its unity of effect turns largely upon its brevity; and as there are well-known laws of lyric structure which the lyric poet violates at his peril or obeys to his triumph, so the short story must observe certain conditions and may enjoy certain freedoms that are peculiar to itself. Doubtless our professional story-tellers seated before the gate of Jaffa or Beyrout had ages ago a naïve instinctive apprehension of these principles of their art, but it is equally true that the story-writers of our own day, profiting by the accumulated experience of the race, responding quickly to international literary influences, prompt to learn from and to imitate one another, are consciously and no doubt self-consciously studying their art as it has never been studied before. Every magazine brings new experiments in method, or new variations of the old themes, and it would speak ill for the intelligence of these workmen if there could be no registration of results. Some such registration may at any rate be attempted, without being unduly dogmatic, and without making one's pleasure in a short story too solemn and heart-searching an affair.

Every work of fiction, long or short, depends for its charm and power — as we are nowadays taught in the very schoolroom — upon one or all of three elements: the characters, the plot, and the setting. Here are certain persons, doing certain things, in certain circumstances, — and the fiction-writer tells us

about one or another or all three of these phases of his theme. Sometimes he creates vivid characters, but does not know what to do with them; sometimes he invents very intricate and thrilling plots, but the men and women remain nonentities; sometimes he lavishes his skill on the background, the *milieu*, the manners and morals of the age, — the all-enveloping natural forces or historic movements, while his heroes and heroines are hurriedly pushed here and there into place, like dolls at a dolls' tea party. But the masters of fiction, one need hardly say, know how to beget men and women, and to make them march toward events, with the earth beneath their feet and overhead the sky.

Suppose we turn to the first of these three potential elements of interest, and ask what are the requirements of the short story as regards the delineation of character. Looking at the characters alone, and not, for the moment, at the plot or the setting, is there any difference between the short story and the novel? There is this very obvious difference: if it is a character-story at all, the characters must be unique, original enough to catch the eye at once.

Everybody knows that in a novel a commonplace person may be made interesting by a deliberate, patient exposition of his various traits, precisely as we can learn to like very uninteresting persons in real life if circumstances place them day after day at our elbows. Who of us would not grow impatient with the early chapters of *The Newcomes*, for instance, or *The Antiquary*, if it were not for our faith that Thackeray and Scott know their business, and that every one of those commonplace people will contribute something in the end to the total effect? And even where the gradual development of character, rather than the mere portrayal of character, is the theme of a novelist, as so frequently with George Eliot, how colorless may be the personality at the outset, how narrow the range of thought

and experience portrayed! Yet, in George Eliot's own words, "these commonplace people have a conscience, and have felt the sublime prompting to do the painful right." They take on dignity from their moral struggle, whether the struggle ends in victory or defeat. By an infinite number of subtle touches they are made to grow and change before our eyes, like living, fascinating things.

But all this takes time, — far more time than is at the disposal of the short story writer. If his special theme be the delineation of character, he dare not choose colorless characters; if his theme is character-development, then that development must be hastened by striking experiences, — like a plant forced in a hothouse, instead of left to the natural conditions of sun and cloud and shower. For instance, if it be a love story, the hero and heroine must begin their decisive battle at once, without the advantage of a dozen chapters of preliminary skirmishing. If the hero is to be made into a villain or a saint, the chemistry must be of the swiftest; that is to say, unusual forces are brought to bear upon somewhat unusual personalities. It is an interesting consequence of this necessity for choosing the exceptional rather than the normal, that so far as the character-element is concerned the influence of the modern short story is thrown upon the side of romanticism rather than of realism.

And yet it is by no means necessary that the short story should depend upon character-drawing for its effect. If its plot be sufficiently entertaining, comical, novel, thrilling, the characters may be the merest lay figures and yet the story remain an admirable work of art. Poe's tales of ratiocination, as he loved to call them, like *The Gold-Bug*, *The Purloined Letter*, or his tales of pseudo-science, like *The Descent into the Maelstrom*, are dependent for none of their power upon any interest attaching to character. The exercise of the pure

logical faculty, or the wonder and the terror of the natural world, gives scope enough for that consummate craftsman. We have lately lost one of the most ingenious and delightful of American story-writers, whose tales of whimsical predicament illustrate this point very perfectly. Given the conception of "Negative Gravity," what comic possibilities unfold themselves, quite without reference to the personality of the experimenter! I should be slow to assert that the individual idiosyncrasies of the passengers aboard that remarkable vessel *The Thomas Hyke* do not heighten the effect produced by their singular adventure, but they are not the essence of it. *The Lady or the Tiger* remains a perpetual riddle, does it not, precisely because it asks: "What would *a woman* do in that predicament?" Not what this particular barbarian princess would do, for the author cunningly neglected to give her any individualized traits. We know nothing about her; so that there are as many answers to the riddle as there are women in the world. We know tolerably well what choice would be made in those circumstances by a specific woman like *Becky Sharp* or *Dorothea Casaubon* or *Little Em'ly*; but to affirm what *a woman* would decide? Ah, no; Mr. Stockton was quite too clever to attempt that.

Precisely the same obliteration of personal traits is to be noted in some tales involving situations that are meant to be taken very seriously indeed. The reader will recall Poe's story of the Spanish Inquisition, entitled *The Pit and the Pendulum*. The unfortunate victim of the inquisitors lies upon his back, strapped to the stone floor of his dungeon. Directly above him is suspended a huge pendulum, a crescent of glittering steel, razor-edged, which at every sweep to and fro lowers itself inch by inch toward the helpless captive. As he lies there, gazing frantically upon the terrific oscillations of that hissing steel, struggling, shrieking, or calculat-

ing with the calmness of despair, Poe paints with extraordinary vividness his sensations and his thoughts. But who is he? He is nobody, — anybody, — he is John Doe or Richard Roe, — he is *man* under mortal agony, — not a particular man; he has absolutely no individuality, save possibly in the ingenuity by means of which he finally escapes. I should not wish to imply that this is a defect in the story. By no means. Poe has wrought out, no doubt, precisely the effect he intended: the situation itself is enough without any specific characterization; and yet suppose we had Daniel Deronda strapped to that floor, or Mr. Micawber, or Terence Mulvaney? At any rate, the sensations and passions and wily stratagems of these distinct personalities would be more interesting than the emotions of Poe's lay figure. The novelist who should place them there would be bound to tell us what they — and no one else — would feel and do in that extremity of anguish. Not to tell us would be to fail to make the most of the artistic possibilities of the situation. Poe's task, surely, was much less complex. *The Pit and the Pendulum* is perfect in its way, but if the incident had been introduced into a novel a different perfection would have been demanded.

Nor is it otherwise if we turn to that third element of effect in fiction, namely, the circumstances or events enveloping the characters and action of the tale. The nature of the short story is such that both characters and action may be almost without significance, provided the atmosphere — the place and time — the background — is artistically portrayed. Here is the source of the perennial pleasure to be found in Mr. P. Deming's simple *Adirondack Stories*. If the author can discover to us a new corner of the world, — as Mr. Norman Duncan and Mr. Jack London have done in the current number of this magazine, or sketch the familiar scene to our heart's desire, like Mr. Colton and

Miss Alice Brown, or illumine one of the great human occupations, as war, or commerce, or industry, he has it in his power, through this means alone, to give us the fullest satisfaction. The modern feeling for landscape, the modern curiosity about social conditions, the modern æsthetic sense for the characteristic rather than for the beautiful as such, all play into the short story writer's hands. Many a reader, no doubt, takes up Miss Wilkins's stories, not because he cares much about the people in them or what the people do, but just to breathe for twenty minutes the New England air — if in truth that be the New England air! You may even have homesickness for a place you have never seen, — some Delectable Duchy in Cornwall, a window in Thrums, a Californian mining camp deserted before you were born, — and Mr. Quiller Couch, or Mr. Barrie, or Bret Harte will take you there, and that is all you ask of them. The popularity which Stephen Crane's war stories enjoyed for a season was certainly not due to his characters, for his personages had no character, not even names, — nor to the plot, for there was none. But the sights and sounds and odors and colors of War — as Crane imagined War — were plastered upon his vacant-minded heroes as you would stick a poster to a wall, and the trick was done. In other words, the setting was sufficient to produce the intended effect.

It is true, of course, that many stories, and these perhaps of the highest rank, avail themselves of all three of these modes of impression. Bret Harte's *Luck of Roaring Camp*, Mr. Cable's *Posson Jone*, Mr. Aldrich's *Marjorie Daw*, Mr. Kipling's *The Man Who Would be King*, Miss Jewett's *The Queen's Twin*, Miss Wilkins's *A New England Nun*, Dr. Hale's *The Man Without a Country*, present people and events and circumstances, blended into an artistic whole that defies analysis. But because we sometimes re-

ceive compound measure, pressed down and running over, we should not forget that the cup of delight may be filled in a simpler and less wonderful way.

This thought suggests the consideration of another aspect of our theme, namely, the opportunity which the short story, as a distinct type of literature, gives to the writer. We have seen indirectly that it enables him to use all his material, to spread before us any hints in the fields of character or action or setting, which his notebook may contain. Mr. Henry James's stories very often impress one as chips from the workshop where his novels were built; — or, to use a less mechanical metaphor, as an exploration of a tempting side path, of whose vistas he had caught a passing glimpse while pursuing some of his retreating and elusive major problems.

It is obvious likewise that the short story gives a young writer most valuable experience at the least loss of time. He can tear up and try again. Alas, if he only would do so a little oftener! He can test his fortune with the public through the magazines, without waiting to write his immortal book. For older men in whom the creative impulse is comparatively feeble, or manifested at long intervals only, the form of the short story makes possible the production of a small quantity of highly finished work. But these incidental advantages to the author himself are not so much to our present purpose as are certain artistic opportunities which his strict limits of space allow him.

In the brief tale, then, he may be didactic without wearying his audience. Not to entangle one's self in the interminable question about the proper limits of didacticism in the art of fiction, one may assert that it is at least as fair to say to the author, "You may preach if you wish, but at your own risk," as it is to say to him, "You shall not preach at all, because I do not like to listen." Most of the greater English

fiction-writers, at any rate, have the homiletic habit. Dangerous as this habit is, uncomfortable as it makes us feel to get a sermon instead of a story, there is sometimes no great harm in a sermonette. "This is not a tale exactly. It is a tract," are the opening words of one of Mr. Kipling's stories, and the tale is no worse — and likewise, it is true, no better — for its profession of a moral purpose. Many a tract, in this generation so suspicious of its preachers, has disguised itself as a short story, and made good reading, too. For that matter, not to grow quite unmindful of our white-robed, white-bearded company sitting all this time by the gate of Jaffa, there is a very pretty moral, as Mr. Cody has taken pains to point out, even in the artless tale of Aladdin's Lamp.

The story-writer, furthermore, has this advantage over the novelist, that he can pose problems without answering them. When George Sand and Charles Dickens wrote novels to exhibit certain defects in the organization of human society, they not only stated their case, but they had their triumphant solution of the difficulty. So it has been with the drama, until very recently. The younger Dumas had his own answer for every one of his problem-plays. But with Ibsen came the fashion of staging your question at issue, in unmistakable terms, and not even suggesting that one solution is better than another. "Here are the facts for you," says Ibsen; "here are the modern emotions for you; my work is done." In precisely similar fashion does a short story writer like Maupassant fling the facts in our face, brutally, pitilessly. We may make what we can of them; it is nothing to him. He poses his grim problem with surpassing skill, and that is all. A novel written in this way grows intolerable, and one may suspect that the contemporary problem-novel is apt to be such an unspeakable affair, not merely for its dubious themes and more than dubious

style, but because it reveals so little power to "lay" the ghosts it raises.

Again, the short story writer is always asking us to take a great deal for granted. He begs to be allowed to state his own premises. He portrays, for instance, some marital comedy or tragedy, ingeniously enough. We retort, "Yes; but how could he have ever fallen in love with her in the first place?" "Oh," replies the author off-hand, "that is another story." But if he were a novelist, he would not get off so easily. He might have to write twenty chapters, and go back three generations, to show why his hero "fell in love with her in the first place." All that any fiction can do — very naturally — is to give us, as we commonly say, a mere cross-section of life. There are endless antecedents and consequents with which it has no concern; but the cross-section of the story-writer is so much thinner that he escapes a thousand inconveniences and even then considers it beneath him to explain his miracles.

What is more, the laws of brevity and unity of effect compel him to omit, in his portrayal of life and character, many details that are unlovely. Unless, like some very gifted fiction-writers of our time, he makes a conscientious search for the repulsive, it is easy for him to paint a pleasant picture. Bret Harte's earliest stories show this happy instinct for the æsthetic, for touching the sunny places in the lives of extremely disreputable men. His gamblers are exhibited in their charming mood; his outcasts are revealed to us at the one moment of self-denying tenderness which insures our sympathy. Such a selective method is perfectly legitimate and necessary: *The Luck of Roaring Camp* and *The Outcasts of Poker Flat* each contains but slightly more than four thousand words. All art is selective, for that matter, but were a novelist to take the personages of those stories and exhibit them as full-length figures, he would be bound

to tell more of the truth about them, unpleasant as some of the details would be. Otherwise he would paint life in a wholly wrong perspective. Bret Harte's master, Charles Dickens, did not always escape this temptation to juggle with the general truth of things; the pupil escaped it, in these early stories at least, simply because he was working on a different scale.

The space limits of the short story allow its author likewise to make artistic use of the horrible, the morbid, the dreadful, — subjects too poignant to give any pleasure if they were forced upon the attention throughout a novel. *The Black Cat*, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Descent into the Maelstrom*, are admirable examples of Poe's art, but he was too skillful a workman not to know that that sort of thing if it be done at all must be done quickly. Four hundred pages of *The Black Cat* would be impossible.

And last in our list of the distinct advantages of the art-form we are considering is the fact that it allows a man to make use of the vaguest suggestions, a delicate symbolism, a poetic impressionism, fancies too tenuous to hold in the stout texture of the novel. Wide is the scope of the art of fiction; it includes even this borderland of dreams. Poe's marvelous *Shadow*, a *Parable*; *Silence*, a *Fable*; Hawthorne's *The Hollow of the Three Hills*, or *The Snow-Image*; many a prose poem that might be cited from French and Russian writers; — these illustrate the strange beauty and mystery of those twilight places where the vagrant imagination hovers for a moment and flutters on.

It will be seen that all of the opportunities that have been enumerated — the opportunity, namely, for innocent didacticism, for posing problems without answering them, for stating arbitrary premises, for omitting unlovely details and, conversely, for making beauty out of the horrible, and finally for poetic symbolism — are connected

with the fact that in the short story the powers of the reader are not kept long upon the stretch. The reader shares in the large liberty which the short story affords to the author. This type of prose literature, like the lyric in poetry, is such an old, and simple, and free mode of expressing the artist's personality! As long as men are interesting to one another, as long as the infinite complexities of modern emotion play about situations that are as old as the race, so long will there be an opportunity for the free development of the short story as a literary form.

Is there anything to be said upon the other side? Are the distinct advantages of this art-form accompanied by any strict conditions, upon conformity to which success depends? For the brief tale demands, of one who would reach the foremost skill in it, two or three qualities that are really very rare.

It calls for visual imagination of a high order: the power to see the object; to penetrate to its essential nature; to select the one characteristic trait by which it may be represented. A novelist informs you that his heroine, let us say, is seated in a chair by the window. He tells you what she looks like: her attitude, figure, hair and eyes, and so forth. He can do this, and very often seems to do it, without really seeing that individual woman or making us see her. His trained pencil merely sketches some one of the same general description, of about the equivalent hair and eyes, and so forth — seated by that general kind of window. If he does not succeed in making her real to us in that pose, he has a hundred other opportunities before the novel ends. Recall how George Eliot pictures Dorothea in Middlemarch, now in this position, now in that. If one scene does not present her vividly to us, the chances are that another will, and in the end, it is true, we have an absolutely distinct image of her. The short

story writer, on the other hand, has but the one chance. His task, compared with that of the novelist, is like bringing down a flying bird with one bullet, instead of banging away with a whole handful of birdshot and having another barrel in reserve. Study the descriptive epithets in Stevenson's short stories: how they bring down the object! What an eye! And what a hand! No adjective that does not paint a picture or record a judgment; and if it were not for a boyish habit of showing off his skill and doing trick shots for us out of mere superfluity of cleverness, what judge of marksmanship would refuse Master Robert Louis Stevenson the prize?

An imagination that penetrates to the very heart of the matter; a verbal magic that recreates for us what the imagination has seen; — these are the tests of the tale-teller's genius. A novel may be high up in the second rank — like Trollope's and Bulwer-Lytton's — and lack somehow the literary touch. But the only short stories that survive the year or the decade are those that have this verbal finish, — "fame's great antiseptic, style." To say that a short story at its best should have imagination and style is simple enough. To hunt through the magazines of any given month and find such a story is a very different matter. Out of the hundreds of stories printed every week in every civilized country, why do so few meet the supreme tests? To put it bluntly, does this form of literature present peculiar attractions to mediocrity?

For answer, let us look at some of the qualities which the short story fails to demand from those who use it. It will account in part for the number of short stories written.

Very obviously, to write a short story requires no sustained power of imagination. So accomplished a critic as Mr. Henry James believes that this is a purely artificial distinction; he thinks

that if you can imagine at all, you can keep it up. Ruskin went even farther. Every feat of the imagination, he declared, is easy for the man who performs it; the great feat is possible only to the great artist, yet if he can do it at all, he can do it easily. But as a matter of fact, does not the power required to hold steadily before you your theme and personages and the whole little world where the story moves correspond somewhat to the strength it takes to hold out a dumb-bell? Any one can do it for a few seconds; but in a few more seconds the arm sags; it is only the trained athlete who can endure even to the minute's end. For Hawthorne to hold the people of *The Scarlet Letter* steadily in focus from November to February, to say nothing of six years' preliminary brooding, is surely more of an artistic feat than to write a short story between Tuesday and Friday. The three years and nine months of unremitting labor devoted to *Middlemarch* does not in itself afford any criterion of the value of the book; but given George Eliot's brain power and artistic instinct to begin with, and then concentrate them for that period upon a single theme, and it is no wonder that the result is a masterpiece. "Jan van Eyck was never in a hurry," — says Charles Reade of the great Flemish painter in *The Cloister and the Hearth*, — "Jan van Eyck was never in a hurry, and therefore the world will not forget him in a hurry."

This sustained power of imagination and the patient workmanship that keeps pace with it are not demanded by the brief tale. It is a short distance race, and any one can run it indifferently well.

Nor does the short story demand of its author essential sanity; breadth and tolerance of view. How morbid does the genius of a Hoffmann, a Poe, a Maupassant seem, when placed alongside the sane and wholesome art of Scott and Fielding and Thackeray!

Sanity, balance, naturalness; the novel stands or falls in the long run by these tests. But your short story writer may be fit for a madhouse and yet compose tales that shall be immortal. In other words, we do not ask of him that he shall have a philosophy of life, in any broad, complete sense. It may be that Professor Masson, like a true Scotchman, insisted too much upon the intellectual element in the art of fiction when he declared, "Every artist is a thinker whether he knows it or not, and ultimately no artist will be found greater as an artist than he was as a thinker." But he points out here what must be the last of the distinctions we have drawn between the short story and the novel. When we read *Old Mortality*, or *Pendennis*, or *Daniel Deronda*, we find in each book a certain philosophy, "a chart or plan of human life." Consciously or unconsciously held or formulated, it is nevertheless there. The novelist has his theory of this general scheme of things which enfolds us all, and he cannot write his novel without betraying his theory. "He is a thinker whether he knows it or not."

But the story-writer, with all respect to him, need be nothing of the sort. He deals not with wholes, but with fragments; not with the trend of the great march through the wide world, but with some particular aspect of the procession as it passes. His story may be, as we have seen, the merest sketch of a face, a comic attitude, a tragic incident; it may be a lovely dream, or a horrid nightmare, or a page of words that haunt us like music. Yet he need not be consistent; he need not think things through. One might almost maintain that there is more of an answer, implicit or explicit, to the great problems of human destiny in one book like *Vanity Fair* or *Adam Bede* than in all of Mr. Kipling's one hundred and sixty short stories taken together, — and Mr. Kipling is indubitably the most gifted story-teller of our time.

Does not all this throw some light upon the present popularity of the short story with authors and public alike? Here is a form of literature easy to write and easy to read. The author is often paid as much for a story as he earns from the copyrights of a novel, and it costs him one tenth the labor. The multiplication of magazines and other periodicals creates a constant market, with steadily rising prices. The qualities of imagination and style that go to the making of a first-rate short story are as rare as they ever were, but one is sometimes tempted to think that the great newspaper and magazine reading public bothers itself very little about either style or imagination. The public pays its money and takes its choice.

And there are other than these mechanical and commercial reasons why the short story now holds the field. It is a kind of writing perfectly adapted to our over-driven generation, which rushes from one task or engagement to another, and between times, or on the way, snatches up a story. Our habit of nervous concentration for a brief period helps us indeed to crowd a great deal of pleasure into the half-hour of perusal; our incapacity for prolonged attention forces the author to keep within that limit, or exceed it at his peril.

It has been frequently declared that this popularity of the short story is unfavorable to other forms of imaginative literature. Many English critics have pointed out that the reaction against the three-volume novel, and particularly against George Eliot, has been caused by the universal passion for the short story. And the short story is frequently made responsible for the alleged distaste of Americans for the essay. We are told that nobody reads magazine poetry, because the short stories are so much more interesting.

In the presence of all such brisk generalizations, it is prudent to exercise a little wholesome skepticism. No one really knows. Each critic can easily

find the sort of facts he is looking for. American short stories have probably trained the public to a certain expectation of technical excellence in narrative which has forced American novel-writers to do more careful work. But there are few of our novel-writers who exhibit a breadth and power commensurate with their opportunities, and it is precisely these qualities of breadth and power which an apprenticeship to the art of short story writing seldom or never seems to impart. The wider truth, after all, is that literary criticism has no apparatus delicate enough to measure the currents, the depths and the tideways, the reactions and interactions of literary forms. Essays upon the evolution of literary types, when written by men like M. Brunetière, are fascinating reading, and for the moment almost persuade you that there is such a thing as a real evolution of types, that is, a definite replacement of a lower form by a higher. But the popular caprice of an hour upsets all your theories. Mr. Howells had no sooner proved, a few years ago, that a certain form of realism was the finally evolved type in fiction, than the great reading public promptly turned around and bought *Treasure Island*. That does not prove *Treasure Island* a better story than *Silas Lapham*; it proves simply that a trout that will rise to a brown hackle to-day will look at nothing but a white miller to-morrow; and that when the men of the ice age grew tired of realistic anecdotes somebody yawned and poked the fire and called on a romanticist. One age, one stage of culture, one mood, calls for stories as naïve, as grim and primitive in their stark savagery as an Icelandic saga; another age, another mood, — nay, the whim that changes in each one of us between morning and evening, — chooses stories as deliberately, consciously artificial as *The Fall of the House of Usher*. Both types are admirable, each in its own way, provided both stir the imagination. For the types will come and go and

come again; but the human hunger for fiction of some sort is never sated. Study the historical phases of the art of fiction as closely as one may, there come moments — and perhaps the close of an essay is an appropriate time to confess it — when one is tempted to say with Wilkie Collins that the whole art of fiction can be summed up in three precepts: “Make ’em laugh; make ’em cry; make ’em wait.”

The important thing, the really suggestive and touching and wonderful thing, is that all these thousands of contemporary and ephemeral stories are laughed over and cried over and waited for by somebody. They are read, while the “large still books” are bound in full calf and buried. Do you remember Pomona in Rudder Grange reading aloud in the kitchen every night after she had washed the dishes, spelling out with blundering tongue and beating heart: “Yell — after — yell — resounded — as — he — wildly — sprang” — Or “Ha — ha — Lord — Marmont — thundered — thou — too — shalt — suffer”? We are all more or less like

Pomona. We are children at bottom, after all is said, children under the story-teller’s charm. Nansen’s stout-hearted comrades tell stories to one another while the Arctic ice drifts onward with the Fram; Stevenson is nicknamed The Tale-Teller by the brown-limbed Samoans; Chinese Gordon reads a story while waiting — hopelessly waiting — at Khartoum. What matter who performs the miracle that opens for us the doors of the wonder-world? It may be one of that white-bearded company at the gate of Jaffa; it may be an ardent French boy pouring out his heart along the bottom of a Paris newspaper; it may be some sober-suited New England woman in the decorous pages of *The Atlantic Monthly*; it may be some wretched scribbler writing for his supper. No matter, if only the miracle is wrought; if we look out with new eyes upon the many-featured, habitable world; if we are thrilled by the pity and the beauty of this life of ours, itself brief as a tale that is told; if we learn to know men and women better, and to love them more.

B. P.

THE CAVE OF ADULLAM.

“I HAVE often thought,” said the young minister, “that your house might be called the Cave of Adullam.”

Miss Lucretia Blaine adjusted her glasses, as if they might help her to some mental insight, and then illogically directed her puzzled gaze at him over their top. She was short and plump, with brown eyes and an abundance of bright hair lapsing into dun maturity. There was so much of the hair that it was difficult to manage, and she had wound it in a sort of crown. So it happened that she carried her head in a fashion that looked like haughtiness and belied the patient seeking of her

dove’s eyes. She was not much given to reading, even Bible reading, and the minister’s pictorial talk perplexed her. It was vaguely discomfiting, in a way, much like the minister himself. He was a short and muscular man, with a scholarly forehead, a firm mouth, and eyeglasses magnificently set in gold. He had always disturbed Miss Lucretia, coming as he did after a mild and fading pulpit dynasty. She could never understand how he knew so much, at his time of life, about human trials and their antidotes; his autocracy over the moral world was even too bracing, too insistent. Now she took off her glasses

and laid them down, regarding him with that blurred, softened look which is the gift of eyes unused to freedom.

"I don't know," said she, "as I rightly understand."

"The Cave of Adullam!" repeated the minister, in his pulpit manner. "David was there, if you remember, in the time of his banishment, 'and every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented gathered themselves unto him.' It was a refuge. Your house appeals to me, in a figurative sense, as being somewhat the same thing. The poor, the unfortunate, flee hither to you. This is the Cave of Adullam."

New trouble added itself to Miss Lucretia's look. This unnecessary classifying merely greatedened her accepted load. She only saw herself pottering about, doing her chores and serving the people who were mysteriously meted out to her. Life was very simple until it became complicated by words.

"Well," said she vaguely, "I guess there's a good many such places, if all was known."

"Yes," returned the minister, "we all have some earthly refuge."

"I should like to know what cousin 'Cretia's got!" came a young voice from the doorway, — a woman's voice, melodious, full. There stood Lucrece, a distant relative defined within some limit of cousinship. She was tall and strenuous, a girl all life and the desire of life. Her pose had an unconsidered beauty; her muscles, whether in rest or action, obeyed according purposes and wrought out harmony. The minister caught his breath as her face flowered upon him like some exotic bloom. He had a young wife at home, and her he truly cherished; yet no one could look upon Lucrece and continue quite unmoved.

Miss Lucretia only smiled at her. She was used to the incursions of the young and passionate thing. Dealing

with the hot moods Lucrece engendered seemed more or less like feeding a tame leopard in the kitchen.

"I'd like to know," continued Lucrece rapidly, in her moving contralto, "what refuge cousin 'Cretia's had! There's great-uncle Pike in the parlor chamber. He's got dropsy. He likes it. There's cousin Mary Poole in the west room. She's got nerves. Cousin 'Cretia's had to hear her clack from sunrise to sunset for going on nine years. Mary Poole and uncle Pike have got their refuge, both of 'em. Where's cousin 'Cretia's?"

"There, there!" counseled Lucretia. "You come in, dear, an' se' down."

The minister cleared his throat. He was momentarily dashed by this onslaught of the human, and the natural man in him agreed with Lucrece. Yet officially he could not concur.

"All these trials," said he, with no abatement of his former emphasis, "will be stars in her crown of rejoicing."

"Oh!" returned the girl bitingly. She came in and stood by the mantel, her head held high, as if it carried a weight she scorned. "But what about now? They're having their refuge now. What about cousin 'Cretia's?"

"Crechy!" came a wheezing voice from above. "Crechy, you step up here a minute!"

This might have been a signal for concerted effort. Another voice, dramatically muffled, issued from the west room.

"Crechy, you mind what I say! You come in here first! Crechy, you come!"

Lucretia rose in haste and made her capable way out of the room, fitting on her glasses as she went.

"There!" said Lucrece triumphantly, having seen the proving of her point, "they're both calling on her at once. That's what they do. They're neck and neck when it comes to trouble. If one finds a feather endwise in the bed, the other falls over a square in the car-

pet. And cousin 'Cretia's got to smooth it all out."

The minister felt his poverty of resource. The young creature interrogating him at white heat would have flouted his divine commonplaces. He knew that, and decided, with true humility, that he should only be able to meet her after a season of prayer.

"I cannot account for it," he said, rising with dignity. "I fear I must be going. Please say good-by to Miss Lucretia."

The girl accompanied him to the door with all the outward courtesy due him and his office; but her mind seemed suddenly to be elsewhere. She shook hands with him; and then, as he walked down the path between beds of velvet pinks, her fighting blood rose once more, and she called lightly after him, "What about cousin 'Cretia?"

But he made no answer, nor did she wait for one. On the heels of her question she turned back into the sitting-room and flung herself at full length on the broad lounge, where she lay tapping the white line of her teeth with an impatient finger. Presently Lucretia came down the stairs and, entering the room, gave a quick look about. Her eyes interrogated Lucrece.

"Yes," said the girl carelessly, "he's gone. He thinks I'm awful."

Lucretia sat down again by the window and took up her work. There was an abiding stillness about her. She was very palpably a citizen of the world, and yet not of it, as if some film lay between her and the things that are.

"Have both of 'em had a drink of water?" asked the girl satirically.

"Yes, both of 'em!"

"Have they ordered what they want for supper?"

A slow smile indented the corners of Lucretia's mouth. "Well," said she indulgently, "I b'lieve they did mention it."

"I bet they did! And to-morrow it'll be just the same, and to-morrow,

and to-morrow. It's all very well to talk about Caves of Adullam. Where's your cave?"

Lucretia dropped her work and gazed at the girl with unseeing eyes. She had the remote look of one who conjures up visions at will. "Don't you worry," said she. "I don't mind them no more than the wind that blows."

"Well," said Lucrece moodily, "I suppose everybody's got to have something. Only it seems as if you had everything. They all come and sponge on you. So do I. To-day I'm madder'n a hatter, and I put for you."

Lucretia's glance returned to a perception of tangible things.

"What is it, Lucrece?"

The girl spoke with the defiance of one who combats tears.

"I'm not going to be married."

"Why not?"

"All the money Tom saved he put in with his father. He wants it out now, to go into the lumber business, and his father won't let him have it. And Tom's got nothing to show for it."

Lucretia sat motionless, a slow flush rising into her face. One might have said she looked ashamed. The room was very still. A bee buzzed into the entry, and described whorled circlelets of flight. The sound of his wandering was loud, out of all proportion to its significance.

"That means putting off our marrying for a year or two," said Lucrece indifferently. Then, having cried a few tears and angrily wiped them away with her hand, she crushed her pink cheek into the sofa pillow for a moment, and, as if she flung aside an unworthy mood, rose to her feet with a spring.

"Tom pretty much hates his father," said she. "He's ashamed to be the son of a miser. He's afraid he might catch it. But he need n't worry. Tom's as good as they make 'em." She walked to the door and then, returning, stooped over Miss Lucretia and kissed the top of her head. "Don't you mind," said

she. "It 'll all come out right. I'm just like them two upstairs, only mine's temper where they've got nerves and dropsy. Why, cousin 'Cretia, what is it?"

Two tears were rolling down Lucretia's cheeks. They splashed upon her hand. Lucrece had never seen her look so moved and broken.

"Why," said the girl, "you taking it so hard as that, just my being married? It's only put off."

Lucretia rose and folded her work conclusively. Her cheeks were pink under their tears, and her voice trembled.

"Don't you worry, dear," said she, a humorous smile beginning to flicker on her lips. "I s'pose I can have my mad fit, too, can't I? There! you run along now. I've got to get in the clo'es."

It was a dismissal not to be gainsaid, and Lucrece went wonderingly away. At the door she hesitated.

"I guess I'll go across lots," said she. "There's old Armstrong coming up the road. I can't talk to him as I feel now." She took the narrow path skirting the house front, and stepped over the low stone wall into the orchard. There she walked away with a lilting motion, and still with the erect pose of one who carries a burden lightly.

Miss Lucretia stood in the middle of the sunny room, so still that all the little noises of the day seemed loud about her. There was the ticking of the clock, the booming of bees on the jessamine sprays, and chiefly the thickened beating of her heart. Suddenly, as if mounting thought had cast her forth on one great wave, she hurried out of doors and down the path to the gate. There, her hand on the palings, she waited for Dana Armstrong. Yet she did not glance at him, as he came striding along the road, but into the green field opposite, and again her eyes had the unseeing look of one to whom visions are more palpable than fact.

Dana Armstrong was over sixty, but he carried himself like a youth, with the free step and sinewy vigor of one whose time is yet to come. And still, in spite of that assertive strength, the years had marked him with their tell-tale tracery. His cheeks were deeply scored with long, crisp lines; his mouth dropped slightly at the corners. The gray eyes were cold, though a fanciful mind might have found in them some promise, however unfulfilled, some hint of blue.

"Dana Armstrong," called Miss Lucretia, "you come here! I want to talk with you."

He quickened his walk, his eyes warming a little at sight of her. She swung open the gate, and he stepped inside.

"Anything happened?" he asked concernedly.

"No. You come in a minute."

She preceded him along the path, her short steps breaking in upon the time of his. They crossed the sun-lighted entry into her sitting-room, and there Dana took off his hat with a grave deliberation much like reverence. It had been years since he entered this room, and the memory of time past shook him a little, dulled as he was by the routine of life and its expediency.

"Be seated," said Miss Lucretia, taking her accustomed place by the window. He laid his hand upon a chair, and then withdrew it. This had been grandfather Blaine's chosen spot, and he remembered how the old man used to sit there thumbing over his well-worn jokes when Dana Armstrong came courting the girl Lucretia, all those years ago. He could not have taken the chair without disturbing some harmony of remembrance; so he sat down on the sofa where Lucrece had lain, and held his hat before him in his stiff, half-bashful way.

"I hear Tom ain't goin' to be married this year," said Miss Lucretia, "him and my Lucrece!" Her voice

came from an aching throat. It sounded harsh and dry.

Armstrong started slightly.

"Well!" said he.

"I'm told Tom's money's in with yours, an' you won't give it up to him."

Dana's eyes darkened. His forehead contracted into those lines she remembered from a vivid past, when his face made her one book of life, to be conned with loyal passion. Yet she was not looking at him now; there was no need. Only it was the young Dana, not the old one, who sat there. That gave her courage. She could throw herself back into that time when no mischance had come between them, and speak with the candor of youth itself, which scorns to compromise. Her eyes were fixed upon the square of sunlight on the floor. Little shadows were playing in it, and once the bulk of a humming bird swept past. The sunlight had a curious look, as if in that small compass lay the summer and all the summers she had lived, witnesses now to her true testimony. She began in an unmoved voice, and Dana listened. She seemed to be speaking from a dream, and inch by inch the dream crept nearer him, and gradually enfolded him without his will.

"When I heard that, not an hour ago, I says to myself, 'Ain't Dana Armstrong got over the love o' money? Ain't he killed that out of him yet?'"

"There, there!" said Dana hastily, exactly as he had used to check her years ago.

"No, it ain't any use to say 'There, there!'" But she was not speaking as the girl was wont to speak. The girl had been quick-tempered, full of be-seechings, hot commendation, wild reproach. "We've got to talk things over. It's a good many years, Dana, since you an' I were goin' to be married that fall, an' you give me up because my sister was in consumption, an' you would n't have her live with us."

He turned full upon her, and seemed

to question her face, the stillness of her attitude. These were strange words to be spoken in the clear New England air. They shook him, not only from their present force, but because they held authority from what had been. They seemed to be joining it to what still was, and he felt the continuity of life in a way bewilderingly new. His voice trembled as he answered with some passion, —

"I did n't give you up!"

"No, not in so many words. You only said Lindy might live for years. You said there'd be doctors' bills, an' my time all eat up waitin' an' tendin' — an' so I told you we would n't consider it any more. An' you went an' married Rhody Bond, an' she helped you save — an' you got rich."

The words, meagre as they were, smote blightingly upon him. He saw his life in all its barrenness. Yet he was not the poorer through that revelation. A window had been opened, disclosing a tract of land he had hitherto seen only by inches. It was hopelessly sterile, — but the window was wide and he could breathe, though chokingly. The woman's voice sounded thin and far away.

"I thought when I lost you my heart broke. I don't know now what happened. Somethin' did; for after that I was different. For I did set by you. I knew your faults, an' they 'most killed me: that is, one of 'em did, — your lovin' money so. But even that never'd ha' separated us if it had n't bid fair to hurt somebody that could n't fight for herself. Nothin' could ever have separated us." She spoke recklessly, as if none but the great emotions were worth her thought. In spite of outer differences, she was curiously like the young Lucrece. There was the same audacity, the courage strong enough to challenge life and all its austere ministrants. But still she did not look at him. If she had looked, it might have been impossible to go on.

"I did n't give you up, Dana Armstrong," said she. "I never give you up one minute."

The man leaned forward and bent his brows upon her, over burning eyes.

"What do you mean?" he asked, with the harshness of emotion leashed and held.

"I never give you up one minute. When Lindy died, I was here all alone. You were married then, but I set by you as much as ever. I did n't even blame you for choosin' money instead o' me. I could n't blame you for anything, any more 'n if you was my own child. You could hurt me. You could n't make me blame you." Her voice ended in one of those lingering falls that stir the heart. It was quite unconsidered. She had as yet no purpose in moving him, even by the simplest eloquence: only her own life was eloquent to her, and she could not voice it save with passion.

"I thought it all over," she said rapidly, like one giving long considered testimony. "I thought it over that summer you an' Rhody moved into the new house. I used to set here nights, with the moon streamin' in through the elms an' consider it. I knew I could n't give you up, and it come over me it wa'n't needful I should. I prayed to God. I made a bargain with Him. I said, 'If I won't speak to him, or look at him, or sin in my thoughts, You let me have some part of him!' An' God was willin'. From that time on it was as if you an' me lived here together: only it was our souls. I never touched your life with Rhody. I never wanted to. Only every day I talked to you. I told you how I wanted you to be good. I tried to be good myself. I tried to do all I could for them that was in need. But I never lived my life with 'em, even when I was tendin' upon 'em an' gettin' kind of achy trottin' up an' down stairs. You an' me were always together, your soul an' mine. The minister says everybody has a refuge. I guess he'd say

that was my refuge. He'd say 't was my cave." Her voice broke upon the word, and she laughed a little in a whimsical fashion.

He stretched out his hand, and his face softened in an uncomprehending sympathy. But she seemed not to see the movement, and went on.

"There was no harm in it. I've come to the conclusion we can set by folks as much as we've a mind to, so long as we don't clutch an' grab, — so long as it's all spirit. I don't know what spirit is, but I know it's suthin' we've got to take account of in this world, same as any other. Well, I went with you, step an' step. When little Tom was born I could have eat him up, I loved him so."

Famished mother-longing had come into her voice, and thenceforward she spoke recklessly. Rehearsing her devotion to the man, she bound herself in stiffer phrasing; when it came to the child, she could name the great name and feel no shyness over it.

"Up to then, I'd said my prayers for you. Then I had the boy to pray for — him and you. When he went to school, he was stronger 'n' heartier 'n any of 'em, an' I was proud of him. When he begun to wait on my Lucrece, I got sort of acquainted with him, an' I says to myself, 'He don't set by money the way his father did.' An' I thanked my God for that."

Dana's hands were trembling. He put up one of them to cover his betraying mouth.

"I kep' near you every step o' the way," said Lucretia mercilessly. "When you got the better o' yourself an' give the town that schoolhouse, I kneeled down an' thanked God. When you done suthin' mean, I tried to go through it with you an' make you see how mean it was. I ain't been away from you a minute, Dana Armstrong, not a minute all your life. I've tried to help you live it the best that ever I knew how."

The man started up in irrepressible passion. "God!" he said brokenly. "If I'd only known!" But he could not have told what it was he should have known. This was only a blind arraignment of a sterile past.

"When Rhody died," said the woman, with the least little break in her voice, "I guess I dropped away a mite. I could n't do no less. Seemed as if 't would be stretchin' out my hand to you, an' that I never did."

"I come over here a year an' a day after she died," said Dana hotly. "You would n't so much as walk downstairs to see me!"

"No," answered Lucretia softly, "I would n't."

"You would n't take the gift of me!"

"Them things were past an' gone," she told him gently, as if she feared to bruise some piteous memory. "There's a time for all things. The minister said so last Sunday. The time for some things ain't ever gone by; but for some it is. If you an' I could have grown old together" — A spasm contracted her face, and it was a moment before she could go on. "But we are old, an' we've got there by different roads. 'T would be like strangers livin' together. But our souls ain't strangers. Mine has lived with you, day in, day out, for forty year."

Pure joy possessed her. She was transfigured. Her face flushed, her eyes shone, each with a spark in it, a look not altogether of this earth. She was radiant with some undefined hope: perhaps of that sort bred, not of circumstance, but out of things unseen. The man was chiefly puzzled, as if he had been called on to test an unsuspected bond. This plain speaking about the eternal was quite new to him. It had an echo of Sunday talk, and yet without that weariness attendant on stiff clothes and lulling tunes. He seemed to be standing in a large place where there was great air to breathe. Hith-

erto he had been the servant of things palpable. Now it began to look as if things were but the tools of Life, and Life herself, august, serene, sat there in the heavens beside her master, God, in untouched sovereignty.

"There!" said Lucretia suddenly, as if she broke a common dream. "I only wanted to tell you how I've battled to have you do what's right. I don't know as I've earned anything of you by battlin', for maybe you'd ha' forbidden it if you'd had your way. But I wanted to tell you there's things fightin' for your soul, an' you better think twice afore you kill out anything in them that's young. Tom an' Lucrece — they've got it all before 'em. You let 'em come together afore it's any ways too late." The note of pleading in her voice seemed as much for herself as for another. She might have been demanding compensation for her years. She had shown him the late blooming of her life, for him to justify. Something he mysteriously owed her, and, with that obedience men give to women when the cry is loud and clear, he knew it must be paid. He rose and stood regarding her. His face worked. His eyes held blue fire. He felt young again, invincible. But though thoughts were crowding on him, he had only one word for them, and that her name.

"Lucretia!"

"What is it?" she asked quietly.

He hesitated and then broke forth blunderingly, like a boy. "Should you just as soon I'd come in here, once a week or so?"

She answered as a mother might who refuses because she must, for hidden reasons.

"I don't think we've any call to see much of one another. We've both got a good deal to think over, an' if Tom an' Lucrece should get them a house, you'd want to run round often an' set with them."

He bent his head in an acquiescent courtliness, and went haltingly out at

the door. Miss Lucretia sat there, her hands dropped loosely in her lap, not thinking, but aware of life, as if the years were leaves fluttering down about her in autumnal air. They prophesied no denial, nor hardly yet decay: only change, the prelude to winter and then again to spring. She sat there until a voice came querulously, —

"Ain't it 'most supper time? You come up here! I'll ventur' you forgot to blaze the fire!"

Next morning, a little after ten, Miss Lucretia went into the garden, to do her weeding. The sun lay hotly on her hair and burnished it to gold. Her cheeks were warm with sunlight and her hands thick coated with the soil. Life and the love of it were keen within her, strong enough to grip eternal things, sane, commonplace like these of earth, and make them hers forever.

The gate clanged, and then there came a rush of skirts. Lucrece was on her like a swooping wind.

"Cousin 'Cretia!" she cried. "Cousin 'Cretia! Get up here! I've got to speak to you."

Miss Lucretia rose and found the throbbing creature ready to grasp and hold her. Young Lucrece was lovely,

like the morning. The moodiness of yesterday had quite gone out of her. Sweet, quivering sentience animated her, obedient to the call of life. Her beauty clothed her like a veil: it seemed a wedding veil.

"What do you think?" she said rapidly, in a tone like the brooding note of birds. "Mr. Armstrong's paid over all Tom's money, every cent. And he's given him the deed of the house in the Hollow. And this morning he came over and kissed me — old Armstrong did! — and said he hoped we'd be married right away. I'm awful happy, cousin 'Cretia!"

Lucretia stood there holding the trowel in her earthy hand. Her voice dropped liquidly.

"Did he?" she said, not looking at Lucrece at all. "Did he?"

The tension of her tone struck keenly on the girl and moved her to some wonder.

"What makes you so pretty, cousin 'Cretia?" she asked, half timorous because the other woman seemed so far away. "What makes you speak so? Is it because I'm glad?"

"Yes," answered Lucretia softly. "An' I'm glad, too!"

Alice Brown.

RAPIDS AT NIGHT.

HERE at the roots of the mountains,
Between the sombre legions of cedars and tamaracks,
The rapids charge the ravine:
A little light, cast by foam under starlight,
Wavers about the shimmering stems of the birches:
Here rise up the clangorous sounds of battle,
Immense and mournful.
Far above curves the great dome of darkness
Drawn with the limitless lines of the stars and the planets.
Deep at the core of the tumult,
Deeper than all the voices that cry at the surface,
Dwells one fathomless sound,
Under the hiss and cry, the stroke and the plangent clamor.

(O human heart that sleeps,
 Wild with rushing dreams and deep with sadness!)
 The abysmal roar drops into almost silence,
 While over its sleep plays in various cadence,
 Innumerable voices crashing in laughter;
 Then rising calm, overwhelming,
 Slow in power,
 Rising supreme in utterance,
 It sways, and reconquers and floods all the spaces of silence,
 One voice, deep with the sadness,
 That dwells at the core of all things.

There by a nest in the glimmering birches,
 Speaks a thrush as if startled from slumber,
 Dreaming of Southern ricefields,
 The moted glow of the amber sunlight,
 Where the long ripple roves among the reeds.

Above curves the great dome of darkness,
 Scored with the limitless lines of the stars and the planets;
 Like the strong palm of God,
 Veined with the ancient laws,
 Holding a human heart that sleeps,
 Wild with rushing dreams and deep with the sadness,
 That dwells at the core of all things.

Duncan Campbell Scott.

BRET HARTE.

BRET HARTE would still have been a genius and a great writer if gold had never been discovered in California; but history records no happier union of the man and the hour than his advent to the Pacific coast close upon the heels of the pioneers. Some writers of fiction, those who have the very highest form of creative imagination, are able from their own minds to spin out the web and woof of the characters that they describe; and it makes little difference where they live or what literary material lies about them. It is true that even such writers do not construct their heroes and heroines quite out of whole cloth; they have a shred or two to begin with. But their work is in the main and essentially the result

not of perception but of creation. The proof of this creative power is that the characters portrayed by it are submitted to various exigencies and influences; they grow, develop, — yes, even change, and yet retain their harmony and consistency. The development of character, or at least the gradual revelation of character, forms the peculiar charm of the novel, as distinguished from the short story.

A few great novels have indeed been written by authors who did not possess this highest form of creative genius, especially by Dickens; but no novel was ever written without betraying the author's deficiency in this respect, if the deficiency existed. It is betrayed in the case both of Kipling and Bret Harte,

each of whom has written a novel, and in each case the book is a failure. Gabriel Conroy, Bret Harte's novel, is so bad as a whole, though abounding in gems, its characters are so inconsistent and confused, its ending so incomprehensible, that it produces upon the reader the effect of a nightmare. It is evident that he took little interest in it, and it reinforces the impression, derived from a careful study of his stories and confirmed by his own statement, that his characters were copied from life. But they were copied with the insight and with the emphasis of genius.

The ability to read human nature as Bret Harte could read it is almost as rare as the higher form of creative ability. How little do we know even of those whom we see every day, whom we have lived with for years! Let a man ask himself what his friend, or his wife, or his son would do in some supposable emergency: how they would take this or that injury or affront, good or bad fortune, a great sorrow or great happiness, a sudden temptation, the treachery of a friend. Let him ask himself any such question, and it is almost certain that, if he is honest with himself, he will have to admit that he can only conjecture what would be the result. This is not because human nature is inconsistent; the law of character is as immutable as any other law: it is because human nature eludes us.

But it did not elude Bret Harte. One who was intimate with him in California says: "He found endless enjoyment in the people whom he saw and met casually. He read their characters as if they were open books." Another early friend of his, Mr. Noah Brooks, in his reminiscences of Bret Harte narrates the following: "In Sacramento he and I met Colonel Starbottle, who had, of course, another name. He wore a tall silk hat and loosely fitting clothes, and he carried on his left arm by its crooked handle a stout walking stick. The colonel was a dignified and benign

figure; in politics he was everybody's friend. A gubernatorial election was pending, and with the friends of Haight he stood at the hotel bar, and as they raised their glasses to their lips he said: 'Here's to the Coming Event!' Nobody asked at that stage of the canvass what the coming event would be, and when the good colonel stood in the same place with the friends of Gorham he gave the same toast, 'The Coming Event.'"

The reader will recognize the picture at once, even to the manner in which the colonel carried his cane.

Bret Harte (christened Francis Brett) was born in Albany, New York, August 25, 1839, of an ancestry which, it is said, combined the English, German, and Hebrew strains. His father was a teacher of Greek in the Albany Female College, but he died while his son was still a child, and Bret Harte's only instruction was obtained in the Albany public schools, and ceased when he was thirteen or fourteen years old. At the age of eleven he wrote a poem called *Autumn Musings*, which was published in the *New York Sunday Atlas*, but the household critics treated it with that frank severity which is peculiar to relatives, and the youthful poet wrote no more, so far as anybody knows, until he electrified the world with *The Heathen Chinee*.

In the spring of 1854, Mrs. Harte and her son sailed for California, — an adventurous step for a poor widow with a boy of fifteen; but no woman not adventurous could have borne such a son. Upon their arrival at San Francisco, Bret Harte walked thence to Sonoma, where he started a school. The school soon closed its doors, but so long as the English tongue remains, it will survive in the pages of Cressy. In all literature there are no children drawn with more sympathy, more insight, more subtlety, more tenderness than those sketched by Bret Harte. He apprehended both the sav-

agery and the innocence of childhood. Every reader is the happier for having known that handsome and fastidious boy Rupert Filgee, who, secure in his avowed predilection for the tavern-keeper's wife, rejected the advances of contemporary girls. "And don't you," to Octavia Dean, "go on breathing over my head like that. If there's anything I hate, it's having a girl breathing around me. Yes, you were! I felt it in my hair."

Upon the failure of the school, Bret Harte tried mining, but that, too, proved unprofitable. Later, at the age of seventeen, he became a deputy collector of taxes, and was sent into the lawless mining camps, where no taxes had ever been collected. But the miners yielded to the unarmed boy what armed men had not been able to extort, and, to the surprise of his superiors, he returned to San Francisco with the taxes in his pouch. Afterward he became a messenger for Wells, Fargo & Company's Express, and traveled upon the box of a stagecoach, presumably with Yuba Bill as the driver. It was a dangerous business: his predecessor had been shot through the arm by a highwayman, his successor was killed; but he escaped without injury. "He bore a charmed life," writes another of his early friends, Mr. C. W. Stoddard. "Probably his youth was his salvation, for he ran a thousand risks, yet seemed only to gain in health and spirits." Later, he drifted to San Francisco, where he began by setting type for a newspaper; from that he soon passed into being a contributor to the newspapers, writing, among other things, *The Heathen Chinees*, the *Condensed Novels*, and his first story, *M'liss*, which was published in the *Golden Era*. It was at this time that he held the position of Secretary in the United States Mint, a sinecure, or very nearly that, such as in the good old days was properly bestowed upon literary men. In 1868 he became the editor of the *Overland Monthly*, and finally he served for a

brief period as Professor of Literature in a San Francisco college.

It will thus be perceived that Bret Harte knew by personal experience almost every form of life in California; and it was such a life as probably the world never saw before, as, almost certainly, it will never see again.

When Bret Harte first became famous he was accused of misrepresenting California society. A philosophic and historical writer of great ability once spoke of the "perverse romanticism" of his tales; and since his death these accusations, if they may be called such, have been renewed in San Francisco with bitterness. It is strange that Californians themselves should be so anxious to strip from their state the distinction which Bret Harte conferred upon it, — so anxious to show that its heroic age never existed, that life in California has always been just as commonplace, respectable, and uninteresting as it is anywhere else in the world. But be this as it may, the records, the diaries, journals, and narratives written by pioneers themselves, and, most important of all, the daily newspapers published in San Francisco and elsewhere from 1849 to 1859, fully corroborate Bret Harte's assertion that he described only what he saw and, in almost every case, only what actually occurred. The fact is that Bret Harte merely skimmed the cream from the surface. The pioneers and those who followed them in the early fifties were mainly young men, many of them well educated, and most of them far above the average in vigor and enterprise. They were such men as enlist in the first years of a war; and few wars involve more casualties than fell to their lot. They were sifted again and again before the survivors reached their destination. Many were killed by the Apaches in the valleys of the Rio Grande and the Colorado; many died of hunger and thirst; many had no other food during the last part

of their journey than the putrefying bodies of the horses and oxen that had perished along the way.

In the story called *Liberty Jones's Discovery*, Bret Harte has sketched the wan and demoralized appearance of a party of emigrants who just managed to reach the promised land. Many were caught by storms in the late autumn, and were snowed up in the mountains. In *Gabriel Conroy* are described the sufferings of such a party, a few of whom were rescued in the spring; and the horrors which Bret Harte relates are only the actual facts of the case upon which his account is based. Those who came by sea had to face a long, wearisome voyage in lumbering craft, besides the deadly Panama fever, and the possible violence of the half-breeds on the Isthmus, who killed fifty out of one ship's company.

Nor was life in California easy: the toil was severe, the food often bad, the exposure productive of rheumatism. Still more wearing upon the nervous system were the excitements, the chances and changes of a miner's life. It has been remarked of the California pioneers, as of the veterans of the Civil War, that they have grown old prematurely. Few of them acquired wealth. Marshall, the sawmill foreman, who discovered those deposits which in five years produced gold to the tune of \$50,000,000, died poor. No millionaires are found among the "Forty-Niners," those time-worn associates who gather annually to celebrate their achievements beneath the folds of the Bear Flag, — the ensign of a premature, half-comic, half-heroic attempt to wrest from Spain what was then an outlying and neglected province. Pioneers do not, as a rule, gather wealth; they make it possible for the shrewd men who come after them to do so.

But the California pioneers enjoyed an experience that was better than wealth. They had their hour. The conditions of society then prevailing were those which

the Almighty and the American Constitution intended should prevail on this continent, but from which we are daily drifting further and further. All men felt that, whether they were born so or not, they had become free and equal. Social distinctions were rubbed out. A man was judged by his conduct; not by his bank account, nor by the class, the family, the club, or the church to which he belonged. Where all are rich equality must prevail, and how could any one be poor when the simplest kind of labor was rewarded at the rate of eight dollars per day; when the average miner "cleaned up" twenty or thirty dollars as the fruit of his day's work, and a taking of from three hundred to five hundred dollars a week for weeks together was not uncommon. Servants received about \$150 a month; and washerwomen acquired fortunes and founded families. It was cheaper to send one's clothes to China to be laundered, and some thrifty persons availed themselves of the fact.

Everybody was young. A man of fifty with a gray beard was pointed out as a curiosity. A woman created more excitement in the streets of San Francisco than an elephant or a giraffe; and little children were followed by admiring crowds eager to kiss them, to shake their hands, to hear their voices, and humbly begging permission to make them presents of gold nuggets and miners' curiosities. Almost everybody was making money; nobody was hampered by past mistakes or misdeeds; all records had been wiped from the slate; the future was full of possibilities; and the dry, stimulating climate of California added its intoxicating effect to the general buoyancy of feeling. Best of all, men were thrown upon their own resources; they themselves, and not a highly organized police and a brave fire department, protected their lives and their property. We pay more dearly than we think for such conveniences. The taxes which they involve

are but a small part of the bill, — the training in manliness and self-reliance which we lose by means of them is a much more serious matter. In the mining camps of California, as in the mediæval towns of England, every man was his own policeman, fireman, carpenter, mason, and general functionary, — nay, he was his own judge, jury, sheriff, and constable. With pistol and bowie knife, he protected his gold, his claim, and his honor. There is something in the Anglo-Saxon nature, left to itself and freed from the restraints of a more or less effete public opinion, which causes it to resent an insult with whatever weapons are sanctioned by custom in the absence of law.

In the early days of California society reverted to this militant, heroic type. The reversion was inevitable under the circumstances, and it was greatly assisted by the social predominance of the Southern element. The class represented and partly caricatured in Colonel Starbottle was numerous, and, for reasons which we have not space to recall, was even more influential than its numbers warranted. An editorial defense of dueling was published in a San Francisco paper of Southern proclivities. The senior editor of the *Alta California* was killed in a duel; and at another time an assistant editor of the same paper published a long letter, in which, with an unconscious humor worthy of Colonel Starbottle himself, he denied the charge of having sought two rival editors with homicidal intent. "I had simply resolved," he wrote, "to pronounce Messrs. Crane and Rice poltroons and cowards, and to spit in their faces; and had they seen fit to resent it on the spot, I was prepared for them." In those early days, when it was impossible to turn a neighbor in distress over to the police, or to a hospital, or to some society, charitable or uncharitable, or to dismiss him with a soup-ticket, — in that barbarous time, men were not only

more warlike, they were more generous, more ready to act upon that instinctive feeling of pity, which is the basis of all morality. In short, the shackles of conventionality and tradition were cast off, and the primeval instincts of humanity — the instincts of pride, of pugnacity, and of pity — asserted themselves.

Such was the society in which Bret Harte, at the age of fifteen, "a truant schoolboy," to use his own words, was plunged. Few writers have shown more well-bred reticence about themselves, but we have seen how varied was his experience, and we catch a single glimpse of him in the exquisite poem, that "spray of Western pine," which he laid upon the grave of Dickens: —

"Perhaps 't was boyish fancy, — for the reader
Was youngest of them all, —
But, as he read, from clustering pine and cedar
A silence seemed to fall;

"The fir-trees, gathering closer in the shadows,
Listened in every spray,
While the whole camp with 'Nell' on English
meadows
Wandered and lost their way."

The extent of the influence which Dickens exercised upon Bret Harte has been much discussed, and the critics commonly agree that this influence was wholly bad. It is true that on the surface we see only the bad effects of it, — certain faults of style, certain mannerisms, a certain mawkishness of sentiment. Bret Harte had a morbid passion for splitting infinitives, and he misuses a few words, such as "gratuitous" and "aggravating," with malice aforethought. The truth is that a spice of self-will, a modest but radical unconventionality were just as much parts of his character as was the fastidiousness which in general controlled his style.

Occasionally, moreover, he lapses into a strange, pompous, involved manner, making his heroes and heroines, in moments of passion or excitement, deliver themselves in a way which seems ludicrously out of place, as, for example, in

Susy, where Clarence says: "If I did not know you were prejudiced by a foolish and indiscreet woman, I should believe you were trying to insult me as you have your adopted mother, and would save you the pain of doing both in *her* house by leaving it now and forever." Or, again, in *A Secret of Telegraph Hill*, where Herbert Bly says to the gambler, whom he has surprised in his room hiding from the vigilance committee: "Whoever you may be, I am neither the police nor a spy. You have no right to insult me by supposing that I would profit by a mistake that made you my guest, and that I would refuse you the sanctuary of the roof that covers your insult as well as your blunder." And yet the speaker is not meant to be a prig.

So again he imitates, or at least resembles, Dickens when he admires his heroes in the wrong place, representing them as saying or doing something quite out of keeping with their real character, and hardly to be described by any other word than that of vulgar. The reader will remember that passage in *Our Mutual Friend*, where Eugene Wrayburn, in his interview with the schoolmaster, taking advantage of both his natural superiority and the superiority of the circumstances in which they happen to be placed, treats the schoolmaster with an arrogance which Dickens evidently feels to be the natural manner of a fine gentleman, but which is really an example of that want of chivalry which is the essence of an ungentlemanly character. Bret Harte in several places makes Jack Hamlin act in almost precisely the same manner, playing the part of a bully in respect to men who were inferior to him socially, and inferior also in that capacity to shoot quickly and accurately, which made Mr. Hamlin formidable. Such, for example, was Hamlin's treatment of Jenkinson, the tavern-keeper, whom the inimitable Enriquez Saltello described with Spanish courtesy as "our good Jenkinson, our host, our father ;"

or again, in *Gabriel Conroy*, where Hamlin insults the porter and threatens, as Bret Harte says, falling into the manner as well as the spirit of Dickens at his very worst, "to forcibly dislodge certain vital and necessary organs from the porter's body."

On the whole, however, it seems highly probable that Bret Harte derived more good than bad from his admiration for Dickens. The reading of Dickens must have stimulated his boyish imagination, must have quickened that sympathy with the weak and suffering, with the downtrodden, with the waifs and strays, with the outcasts of society, which is the keynote of both writers. Sentiment and satire are the two moulds in one or the other of which must be cast all portrayal or discussion of human nature provided that it has any emotional character, — is anything more than coldly analytical. Sentiment furnishes the subjective, and satire the objective method. Sentiment is sympathy, and satire is antipathy. Swift's weapon was satire; that of Lamb was sentiment sharpened by satire. Sterne dealt almost entirely with sentiment. Thackeray could use both instruments with equal skill, but he is known chiefly as a satirist; whereas Dickens was strong in sentiment, and commonly failed when he resorted to satire. Sentiment is an infinitely more valuable quality than satire. Satire is merely destructive, whereas sentiment is constructive. Becky Sharp is a warning; but Colonel Newcome is an inspiration. Satire convicts: sentiment regenerates. The most that satire can do is to clear the ground, to lay bare the follies and vices of human nature, to show how the thing ought not to be done. This is an important and necessary office; but sentiment goes much further: it prompts to action; it supplies the dynamic force of benevolence, of affection, of ambition. It makes the tears flow, the blood kindle. Satire is almost as objectionable as reform; and reformers are noto-

riously unlovely persons. The reformer, like the satirist, can tear down, but he cannot build up; and it is so much more important to build than to destroy that the office of the man of sentiment is far more valuable to the world than that of the man of satire. This is the justification of that popular judgment which, despite the critics, sets Dickens above Thackeray. Dickens, though perhaps the inferior, both as man and artist, is worth more to the world.

Bret Harte, like Dickens, deals mainly with sentiment, but, unlike Dickens, he is a master of satire as well. His satire is directed chiefly against that peculiar form of cold and hypocritical character which sometimes survives as the very dregs of Puritanism. This is the type which he has portrayed with almost savage intensity in the character of a woman who combines sensuality and deceit with the most orthodox form of Protestantism and horse-hair sofa respectability. Occasionally Bret Harte's humor takes a satirical form, as when, after describing how a stranger was shot and nearly killed in a mining camp, he speaks of a prevailing impression in the camp "that his misfortune was the result of the defective moral quality of his being a stranger;" or again in Cressy, where Mrs. McKinstry, the stern survivor of a Kentucky vendetta, is said to have "looked upon her daughter's studies and her husband's interest in them as a weakness that might in process of time produce an infirmity of homicidal purpose, and become enervating of eye and trigger finger. 'The old man's worrits hev sorter shook out a little of his sand,' she explained."

In the main, however, Bret Harte was a writer of sentiment, and that is why he is so beloved. Sentiment resolves itself into humor and pathos; and both humor and pathos are said to consist in the perception of incongruities. In humor, there is the perception of some incongruity which excites derision

and a smile; in pathos, there is the perception of some incongruity which excites pity and a tear. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that in no other writer in the world are humor and pathos so nearly the same as they are in Bret Harte. There are sentences and paragraphs in his stories and poems which might make one reader laugh and another weep, or which, more likely yet, would provoke a mingled smile and tear. Perhaps the most consummate example of this is found in the tale, *How Santa Claus came to Simpson's Bar*.

The reader will remember that Johnny, after greeting the Christmas guests in his "weak, treble voice, broken by that premature hoarseness which only vagabondage and the habit of premature self-possession can give," and after hospitably setting out the whiskey bottle and some crackers, creeps back to bed, and is then accosted by Dick Bullen, the hero of the story.

"'Hello, Johnny! you ain't goin' to turn in agin, are ye?'" said Dick.

"'Yes, I are,'" responded Johnny decidedly.

"'Why, wot's up, old fellow?'"

"'I'm sick.'"

"'How sick?'"

"'I've got a fevier, and childblains, and roomatiz,'" returned Johnny, and vanished within. After a moment's pause, he added in the dark, apparently from under the bedclothes, — "And biles!"

"There was an embarrassing silence. The men looked at each other and at the fire."

I might quote many similar passages. There is one in *Gabriel Conroy* which describes Olly, Gabriel's little sister, getting out of bed to ask what it was that seemed to be troubling him. "She went up to him so softly that she startled him, — shaking a drop of water on the hand that she suddenly threw around his neck. 'You ain't worrying about that woman, Gabe?'"

"'No,'" said Gabriel, with a laugh.

Olly looked down at her hand. Gabriel looked up at the roof. 'There is a leak thar that has got to be stopped to-morrow. Go to bed, Olly, or you 'll take your death.'

In discussing Bret Harte, it is almost impossible to separate substance from style. The style is so good, so exactly adapted to the ideas which he wishes to convey, that one can hardly imagine it to be different. Some thousands of years ago, an Eastern sage remarked that he "would like to write a book such that everybody should conceive that he might have written it himself, and yet so good that nobody else could have written the like." This is the ideal which Bret Harte fulfilled. Almost everything said by any one of his characters is so accurate an expression of that character as to seem inevitable. It is felt at once to be just what such a character must have said. Given the character, the words follow; and anybody could set them down! This is the fallacy underlying that strange feeling, which every reader must have experienced, of the apparent easiness of writing an especially good or telling conversation or soliloquy.

In Bret Harte, at his best, the choice of words, the balance of the sentences, the rhythm of the paragraphs, are very nearly perfect. He had an ear for style just as some persons have an ear for music. In conciseness, in artistic restraint, he is the equal of Turgenieff, of Hawthorne, of Newman. All this could not have been achieved without effort. Bret Harte had the conscience of an artist, if he had no other conscience; his masterpieces were slowly and painfully forged. "One day," wrote Mr. C. W. Stoddard, who was his friend in California, "I found him pacing the floor of his office in the United States Branch Mint. He was knitting his brows and staring at vacancy. I wondered why. He was watching and waiting for a word. . . . I suggested one; it would not answer; it

must be a word of two syllables, or the rhythm of the sentence would suffer. Fastidious to a degree, he could not overlook a lack of finish in a manuscript offered him. He had a special taste in the choice of titles, and I have known him to alter the name of an article two or three times, in order that the table of contents might read handsomely and harmoniously."

The truth is, Bret Harte was essentially an artist, with all the peculiarities, mental and moral, which are commonly associated under that name; and this fact explains some apparent anomalies in his career. Why did he leave and never revisit California? Why did he make his home in England? Bret Harte left California when the glamour had departed from it, when, if not in the state generally, at least in San Francisco, where he was living, a calculating commercialism had in some degree replaced the generous mood of earlier days. It is well known that respectable San Francisco stood aghast at *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, the alarm having been sounded by a feminine proof-reader who was shocked by what she conceived to be the indecency of the tale. Not equally well known is the contrasting fact, now recorded, that another young girl, an assistant in the office of *The Atlantic Monthly*, first called Mr. Fields's attention to the story, upon its publication in the *Overland Monthly*; and Mr. Fields, having read it, wrote that letter, soliciting a contribution to the *Atlantic*, which, as Bret Harte himself has related, encouraged him and confounded his critics. Even the sense of humor must have been weakened in a community which insisted that the newspapers should skip lightly over the facts of a recent and destructive earthquake, lest Eastern capital should become alarmed.

Nor did Bret Harte find elsewhere in this country any rest for the sole of his foot. Fate took him to Cambridge, — a spot which, with all its virtues, could

hardly have been congenial to a poet who had breathed the free air of the Sierras. New York and Boston were only one degree less crude than San Francisco, and almost as provincial. In London, he doubtless found not only a more literary and artistic atmosphere, but also a greater simplicity, — a cultivated simplicity different from, and yet essentially resembling the unsophisticated naturalness of a mining camp. Bret Harte's incapacity to generalize, to deal with abstract notions or general propositions, is another trait of the artistic nature. Everything presented itself to him in a concrete form. He seldom attempts to point the moral of his tales, and when he does so he is apt to go astray. Nor is it easy to persuade one's self that Bret Harte was a very conscientious man, or that he was actuated by lofty motives. Finally, there can be discerned in him that streak of coarseness which so often accompanies extreme refinement and fastidiousness.

But this is all that can be said in disparagement; and one blushes to have said it, when one reflects upon the nobility of the characters with whom Bret

Harte has enriched the world. It is related that of all his stories he himself preferred *Tennessee's Partner*; and this is easy to believe, because the hero of that tale is actuated by love and pity entirely unalloyed, without the slightest admixture of passion or self-interest. We must not stop to call the roll of Bret Harte's heroes and heroines; two characters only shall be mentioned, and first that of the schoolmistress in the *Idyl of Red Gulch*, who, true to her New England instincts and training, gathers her white skirts about her and flies from the temptation, though few would now call it such, which involved the happiness of her life. Not Hawthorne himself could have conceived a character actuated by purer motives, or could have told the story more delicately. The second is the *Rose of Tuolumne*, that beautiful figure, as brave, as womanly, as passionate as Juliet, who, in garments stained with the blood of the man whom she loved, dared his cowardly rival to turn his pistol upon her. Such women make the mothers of heroes, and the genius who can portray them is an element in the formation of an heroic race.

H. C. Merwin.

THE PRINCESS OF MAKE-BELIEVE.

THE Princess was washing dishes. On her feet she would barely have reached the rim of the great dish-pan, but on the soap-box she did very well. A grimy calico apron trailed to the floor.

"Now this golden platter I must wash *extry* clean," the Princess said. "The Queen is v-ery particular about her golden platters. Last time, when I left one o' the corners — it's such a nextremely heavy platter to hold — she gave me a scold — oh, I mean — I mean she tapped me a little love pat on my cheek with her golden spoon."

It was a great brown-veined, stone-ware platter, and the arms of the Princess ached with holding it. Then, in an unwary instant, it slipped out of her soap-sudsy little fingers and crashed to the floor. Oh! oh! the Queen! the Queen! She was coming! The Princess heard her shrill, angry voice, and felt the jar of her heavy steps. There was the space of an instant — an instant is so short! — before the storm broke.

"You little limb o' Satan! That's my best platter, is it? Broke all to bits, eh? I'll break" — But there was a flurry

of dingy apron and dingier petticoats, and the little Princess had fled. She did not stop till she was in her Secret Place among the willows. Her small lean face was pale, but undaunted.

"Th-the Queen is n't feeling very well to-day," she panted. "It's wash-day up at the Castle. She never enjoys herself on wash-days. And then that golden platter — I'm sorry I smashed it all to flinders! When the Prince comes I shall ask him to buy another."

The Prince had never come, but the Princess waited for him patiently. She sat with her face to the west and looked for him to come through the willows with the red sunset light filtering across his hair. That was the way the Prince was coming, though the time was not set. It might be a good while before he came, and then again — you never could tell!

"But when he does, and we've had a little while to get acquainted, then I shall say to him, 'Hear, O Prince, and give ear to my — my petition! For verily, verily, I have broken many golden platters and jasper cups and saucers, and the Queen, long live her! is sore — sore' —"

The Princess pondered for the forgotten word. She put up a little lean brown hand and rubbed a tingling spot on her temple — ah, not the Queen! It was the Princess — long live her! — who was "sore."

"'I beseech thee, O Prince,' I shall say, 'buy new golden platters and jasper cups and saucers for the Queen, and then shall I verily, verily be — be' —"

Oh, the long words — how they slipped out of reach! The little Princess sighed rather wearily. She would have to rehearse that speech so many times before the Prince came. Suppose he came to-night! Suppose she looked up now, this minute, toward the golden west and he was there, swinging along through the willow canes toward her!

But there was no one swinging along through the willows. The yellow light

flickered through — that was all. Somewhere, a long way off, sounded the monotonous hum of men's voices. Through the lace-work of willow twigs there showed the faintest possible blur of color. Down beyond, in the clearing, the Castle Guards in blue jean blouses were pulling stumps. The Princess could not see their dull, passionless faces, and she was glad of it. The Castle Guards depressed her. But they were not as bad as the Castle Guardesses. *They* were mostly old women with bleared, dim eyes, and they wore such faded — silks.

"*My* silk dress is rather faded," murmured the little Princess wistfully. She smoothed down the scant calico skirt with her brown little fingers. The patch in it she would not see.

"I shall have to have the Royal Dress-maker make me another one soon. Let me see, — what color shall I choose? I'd *like* my gold-colored velvet made up. I'm tired of wearing royal purple dresses all the time, though of course I know they're appropriater. I wonder what color the Prince would like best? I should rather choose that color."

The Princess's little brown hands were clasped about one knee, and she was rocking herself slowly back and forth, her eyes, wistful and wide, on the path the Prince would come. She was tired to-day and it was harder to wait.

"But when he comes I shall say, 'Hear, O Prince. Verily, verily, I did not know which color you would like to find me dressed — I mean arrayed — in, and so I beseech thee excuse — *pardon*, I mean mine infirmity.'"

The Princess was not sure of "infirmity," but it sounded well. She could not think of a better word.

"And then — I *think* then — he will take me in his arms, and his face will be all sweet and splendid like the Mother o' God's in the picture, and he will whisper, — I don't think he will say it out loud, — oh, I'd rather not! — 'Verily, Princess,' he will whisper, 'Oh, verily,

verily, thou hast found favor in my sight! And that will mean that he does n't care what color I am, for he — loves — me."

Lower and lower sank the solemn voice of the Princess. Slower and slower rocked the little lean body. The birds themselves stopped singing at the end. In the Secret Place it was very still.

"Oh, no, no, no, — not *verily*!" breathed the Princess, in soft awe. For the wonder of it took her breath away. She had never in her life been loved, and now, at this moment, it seemed so near! She thought she heard the footsteps of the Prince.

They came nearer. The crisp twigs snapped under his feet. He was whistling.

"Oh, I can't look! — I can't!" gasped the little Princess, but she turned her face to the west, — she had always known it would be from the west, — and lifted closed eyes to his coming. When he got to the Twisted Willow she might dare to look, — to the Little Willow Twins, anyway.

"And I shall know when he does," she thought. "I shall know the minute!"

Her face was rapt and tender. The miracle she had made for herself, — the gold she had coined out of her piteous alloy, — was it not come true at last? — *Verily, verily?*

Hush! Was the Prince not coming through the willows? And the sunshine was trickling down on his hair! The Princess knew, though she did not look.

"He is at the Twisted Willow," she thought. "*Now* he is at the Little Willow Twins." But she did not open her eyes. She did not dare. This was a little different, she had never counted on being afraid.

The twigs snapped louder and nearer — now very near. The merry whistle grew clearer, and then it stopped.

"Hullo!"

Did princes say "hullo!" The Princess had little time to wonder, for he was there before her. She could feel his

presence in every fibre of her trembling little being, though she would not open her eyes for very fear that it might be somebody else. No, no, it was the Prince! It was his voice, clear and ringing, as she had known it would be. She put up her hands suddenly and covered her eyes with them to make surer. It was not fear now, but a device to put off a little longer the delight of seeing him.

"I say, hullo! Haven't you got any tongue?"

"Oh, *verily, verily*, — I mean hear, O Prince, I beseech," she panted. The boy's merry eyes regarded the shabby small person in puzzled astonishment. He felt an impulse to laugh and run away, but his royal blood forbade either. So he waited.

"You are the Prince," the little Princess cried. "I've been waiting the longest time, — but I knew you'd come," she added simply. "Have you got your velvet an' gold buckles on? I'm goin' to look in a minute, but I'm waiting to make it spend."

The Prince whistled softly. "No," he said then, "I did n't wear *them* clo'es to-day. You see, my mother" —

"The Queen," she interrupted, "you mean the Queen?"

"You bet I do! She's a reg'lar-built-er! Well, she don't like to have me wearin' out my best clo'es every day," he said gravely.

"No," eagerly, "nor mine don't. Queen, I mean, — but she is n't a mother, mercy, no! I only wear silk dresses every day, not my velvet ones. This silk one is getting a little faded." She released one hand to smooth the dress wistfully. Then she remembered her painfully practiced little speech and launched into it hurriedly.

"Hear, O Prince. *Verily, verily*, I did not know which color you'd like to find me dressed in — I mean *arrayed*. I beseech thee to excuse — oh, *pardon*, I mean" —

But she got no further. She could endure the delay no longer, and her eyes flew open.

She had known his step; she had known his voice. She knew his face. It was terribly freckled, and she had not expected freckles on the face of the Prince. But the merry, honest eyes were the Prince's eyes. Her gaze wandered downward to the homemade clothes and bare, brown legs, but without uneasiness. The Prince

had explained about his clothes. Suddenly, with a shy, glad little cry, the Princess held out her hands to him.

The royal blood flooded the face of the Prince and filled in all the spaces between its little gold-brown freckles. But the Prince held out his hand to her. His lips formed for words and she thought he was going to say, "Verily, Princess, thou hast found favor" —

"Le' 's go fishin'," the Prince said.

Annie Hamilton Donnell.

SILL'S POETRY.

THE appearance of the Poems of Edward Rowland Sill as one of the Limited Editions of the Riverside Press draws attention to a poetic reputation singularly gradual and persistent in its growth. It is nearly thirty-five years since the first slender volume of Sill's work came from the press of Leypoldt & Holt in New York. It was followed at long intervals by four other thin books, of which the later issues were in part reprints, and now, fifteen years after the poet's death, the first collection approximating completeness is ready.

The causes for the slow growth of Sill's fame are not difficult to find. He was notably unconcerned for his reputation. Most of his poems appeared unsigned or over a *nom de plume*, and his poetry was of the undramatic, reflective order that lends itself but indifferently to wide republication or quotation. It was, moreover, peculiarly personal in its appeal. The secret of Longfellow's popularity as a poet, it has been remarked, is that he "expresses a universal sentiment in the simplest and most melodious manner." Sill had no such secret. He had not the secret of form: he never approached Longfellow's mastery of melody. He had even less the secret of matter. The

sentiments he dealt with were not universal, but markedly individual. He did not voice the general mood, but the tingling personal thought that was stirring in his own mind. He once made the distinction in one of his charming bits of prose between the uses of prose and verse, — that prose is the language of one's profession, verse the language of one's heart. Content with giving expression to his own moods, reflections, and sentiments, he was not concerned for the effect upon the public, and he has been sought not by the general throng of readers, but by the constantly growing number who have found their experience reflected in his, who have found themselves in sympathy with the struggle, the doubt, the hope that are voiced in his verses.

Sill was, as the late Mr. H. E. Scudder admirably put it in reviewing the little volume called *Poems in the Atlantic* fifteen years ago, a "battling spirit." Such his inheritance, his temperament, and his environment united to make him. He was born of New England stock, and joined the two strains of preacher and of doctor, which in other times were conceived to possess a subtle opposition, as standing for rival devotions, to body and to spirit. His father and grandfather were physicians, but his

mother's father and grandfather were ministers, and the antinomy which we may imagine dimly suggested in his ancestry was more fully realized by his lack of health, which kept him on the verge of invalidism all his life, and made him sadly familiar with the unending feud of sense and soul. He was born, too, into an environment of moral and spiritual struggle. His youth was passed in the time of preparation for the Civil War. He was an undergraduate at Yale when Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared to open a strife of opinions hardly less significant in the world of thought than the great war was in the world of affairs.

What share each of the elements of strife had in Sill's life it is not easy to say, but together they gave its prevailing tone of unrest that classed him among the Stoics of his time, and made him, with Matthew Arnold and Arthur Hugh Clough, a poet of doubt and spiritual struggle. His best known poem is a prayer; the one which most nearly shares that place is a song of the battlefield; the most musical and equable of his longer poems, *The Venus of Milo*, is of the strife between the higher and the lower love; the most frequently recurring note in his lyrics is that of desire, of a soul disquieted, of longing and aspiration. This turmoil of spirit was a true reflection of Sill's inner state. For years he was in doubt what he was to do. He had expected, while an undergraduate, to enter the ministry, but left college out of heart for it; after six years in the West he returned to Cambridge still undetermined. This long uncertainty, which closed in the realization that he could not find his place in the profession of his choice, gets frequent voice in his poems. The experience of religious doubt which to sensitive and devout souls comes with mortal pangs has had few more touching and wistful expressions than he gave it in the last stanza of *Spring Twilight*. In another poem, *The Thrush*, there is

added to the note of wistfulness and sympathy a somewhat pathetic touch of regret, as if he questioned whether the price in capacity for pain that marks the scale of rank in nature were not too high a price to pay for man's difference from the bird.

Sill's intense sensibility to the pain and ache of the world, and to the pathos of human fate, came to utterance in the plaintive verses, *A Foolish Wish*, with their poignant refrain "Before I go," voicing the world-old shrinking from death like a thin echo from Omar's

"Yet ah, that Spring should vanish with the
Rose!"

but made more touching by their chiding of self and their sense of larger issues: —

" 'T is a child's longing, on the beach at play :
' Before I go,'

He begs the beckoning mother, ' Let me stay
One shell to throw ! '

' T is coming night ; the great sea climbs the
shore, —

' Ah, let me toss one little pebble more,
Before I go ! ' "

So his refined consciousness of the discords of life and its ceaseless contest drove him to ask the old, unanswered questions, — of the nature of things and men, and the constitution of the universe. He did not find the world as Browning found it, subject to man's control, but perceived that,

" Sullen earth can sever souls
Far as the Pleiades."

And as to man's place in it, he wrote, with at least a touch of scorn, in *The Hermitage*, —

" ' T is ludicrous that man should think he
roams

Freely at will a world planned for his use.

Lo, what a mite he is ! Snatched hither and
yon,

Tossed round the sun, and in its orbit flashed
Round other centres, orbits without end ;

His bit of brain too small to even feel
The spinning of the little hailstone, Earth.

So his creeds glibly prate of choice and will,
When his whole fate is an invisible speck
Whirled through the orbits of Eternity."

And in a briefer poem, *Five Lives*, he makes a parable of the utter ephemerality of human life, its pitiful triviality, the folly of its ambitions, the futility of its aims, the emptiness of its honors. A community of Infusoria in a drop of water is the figure under which he presents human society, and the end of it is

"The little ghost of an inaudible squeak
... lost to the frog that goggled from his
stone."

But this merely scornful rendering of *Vanitas Vanitatum* could satisfy no one, least of all so earnest a soul as Sill. It serves only to express a mood and sheds no light on the deeper aspects of life. Far profounder is the poem, *The Fool's Prayer*, of which Professor Royce has made such impressive use in the final chapter of his *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*. In this there is sadness but no scorn. It touches on the lack of dramatic cohesion in the universe, the apparent triviality of the causes of sorrow, in some respects the most perplexing element in life: —

"T is not by guilt the onward sweep
Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay;
'T is by our follies that so long
We hold the earth from heaven away.

"These clumsy feet still in the mire,
Go crushing blossoms without end;
These hard, well-meaning hands we trust
Among the heart-strings of a friend."

These are the deeper notes of Sill's message, and to some measure color all his work. Yet they do not justify the impression that the poems are predominantly sombre. Though the mood never rises to serenity, it does partake of that Wordsworthian calm based on

"the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering."

As Sill wrote a friend in one of his later years, he came in time to feel, "how life is a pretty fair general thing after all, and how happiness evidently is n't the only thing the gods consider good for man." For the most part the poems

are bright-spirited, cheerful with a sort of deliberate cheerfulness; for Sill resembled Stevenson in this, that he took the "great task of happiness" as a true obligation. More contemplative by nature, more given to seeking the springs of motive, Sill lacked the merry darning, the unquenchable high spirits of his fellow invalid and craftsman. Closer kin in spirit to Arnold and Amiel than to Stevenson, he turned like them to nature, and found in the vast calm and sublimity of the Western mountains, as they in the Alps, soothing for his spirit. He has nowhere put this better than in the lines *On a Picture of Mt. Shasta* by Keith: —

"How should a man be eager or perturbed
Within this calm? . . .

Seest thou yon blur far up the icy slope,
Like a man's footprint? Half thy little town
Might hide there, or be buried in what seems
From yonder cliff a curl of feathery snow,
Still the far peak would keep its frozen calm,
Still at the evening on its pinnacle
Would the one tender touch of sunset dwell,
And o'er it nightlong wheel the silent stars.

What is this breathing atom, that his brain
Should build or purpose aught or aught desire,
But stand a moment in amaze and awe,
Rapt on the wonderfulness of the world?"

With the process of the years there came to Sill other consolation than that of nature. The ministry of calm, impersonal, and exterior forces was supplemented by a growing mellowness within. His doubt lost its bitterness and softened into a not unkindly irony; his perplexity took on some coloring of faith and trust. The poem entitled *Roland* may be a true forecast of the port he might have made, as it was a true account of the course he was on. The last stanza of this poem, —

"The weary doubt if all is good,
The doubt if all is ill,
He left to Him who leaves us
To know that all is well,"

and the concluding lines of *A Morning Thought*, —

"And what if then, while the still morning
brightened.

And freshened in the elm the Summer's
breath,

Should gravely smile on me the gentle angel

And take my hand and say, 'My name is
Death,'"

are admirable expressions of the cautious wistful faith, more hopeful than secure, that is typical of our time.

We have given close attention to the personal aspects of Sill's poetry, its self-revelatory character, — not that it is in any close sense autobiographical, but there are correspondences deeper far than those of time and place, — because Sill was essentially a poet of personality, and could reach the general heart only in the measure that he faithfully interpreted his own. This pre-occupation with the inner life had important consequences for his work. It made him vastly more concerned for the substance than the form of his poems. We miss in his work some familiar graces, — sensuous charm of language, warmth and breadth of feeling. Though here and there we come upon lines of simple native beauty, — of minutely appropriate words, like

"Fresh hope upon me every amber dawn,
New peace when evening's violet veil is drawn,"
from *The Venus of Milo*; the line

"And hear the oratorio of the sea,"

from *The Hermitage*, and

"All the holy hills and sacred waters;
When the sea-wind swings its evening censer,"

from *The Singer's Confession*, — we miss the perfect union of music and truth that delights us in the masters of poetry, finding no Spenserian delight in melodious sounds, nor yet the quieter Wordsworthian richness and depth of harmony.

The robuster side of life was in fact hidden from Sill. With all his zest for life, his eager, flashing interest in the thousand facets of existence, he lacked that deeper appetency, that gusto which marks the large, vigorous nature, and

gives rise to that high form of courage which we call humor. This Sill, in common with Arnold and Clough, lacked, and though he possessed irony, which is humor at a lower stage, — humor on the defensive, — there remained an apparent void. Sure as we may be that if Sill had lived he would have arrived at greater mastery of form, increased grace and flexibility of phrase, we must consider this lack beyond remedy. It was a limitation he shared with Arnold and Clough, and may account in all of them for a certain narrowness of range. But in coming from the work of the two elder poets to Sill's we feel a sense of contraction. There is about their poetry an ampler air. It is not alone that Sill's poems are more personal, more lyrical, but they show, perhaps because they have taken rise upon a soil less cultivated, less opulent of historical and literary associations, a more confined aspect. In spite of a similar temper and a common heritage of unrest, they possess less amplitude and poise of power. No poem of Sill's voices the perplexity and confusion of human fate in tones so impersonal and sure as Arnold's *Dover Beach*. It is the same note as Sill has sounded in *The Fool's Prayer*, and in the passage which we have quoted from *The Hermitage*, but beside Arnold's fuller tone how slender seems this pipe. Similarly on the side of hope, though Sill went farther than Clough, he came to no such clear-voiced utterance of faith as that in *Say not the Struggle naught Availeth*.

With all his limitations — and they suffice to determine his rank among the minor poets even of his own time — Sill holds a secure place in the hearts of his readers because of his uncompromising idealism. His clear devotion to the ideal gives the key to which most of his songs are set, and explains, in spite of the often sombre nature of their subjects, the general luminous effect of his poems, which is like that of sunlit spaces, of shining surfaces. No doubt

the brevity of the poems, the pellucid quality of the thought, and the finish of detail have much to do with it, but we feel in such a poem as *The Things that will not Die* a passion for perfection that is a sufficient source of illumination, and is the thing that must suffice, if anything can, to keep Sill's fame alive:—

"And I am glad that neither golden sky,
Nor violet lights that linger on the hill,
Nor ocean's wistful blue shall satisfy,
But they shall fill

With wild unrest and endless longing still
The soul whose hope beyond them all must lie.

"And I rejoice that love shall never seem
So perfect as it ever was to be,
But endlessly that inner haunting dream
Each heart shall see

Hinted in every dawn's fresh purity,
Hopelessly shadowed in each sunset's gleam."

In this fine strain of ardor and aspiration, with its minor chords of the sadness attending all beauty and the passing of all living, Sill has beaten his

music out. This is his native song. Yet even here his kinship to Clough is apparent. It is the note the elder poet sounded in, "I have seen holier things than these." Sill's spiritual affinity to Clough is in fact too close to be concealed. They were much alike in their outward lives as well as in their inner moods. Both were of infirm health; both found their lifework in teaching; both died before their lives or their tasks seemed near completion. And what Lowell wrote of Clough might, with some modifications of time and place, be applied to Sill: "We have a foreboding that Clough, imperfect as he was in many respects, and dying before he had subdued his sensitive temperament to the sterner requirements of his art, will be thought, a hundred years hence, to have been the truest expression in verse of the moral and intellectual tendencies, the doubt and struggle towards settled convictions, of the period in which he lived."

W. B. P.

BOOKS NEW AND OLD.

SUMMER FICTION.

MOST people work pretty hard in summer, but subscribe to a theory of idleness; for whatever contrary practice one may fall into under stress of special conditions, in summer it is one's real business to be idle, and one's solemn duty to be gay. Corollary to this melancholy proposition are the theories of the summer girl, of summer music, and of summer reading. There are, of course, books which especially fit the unforced holiday mood; as a class they will be light, free, somewhat detached from problems and from passions, a little pleasant, a little commonplace, perhaps. They fit a mood rather than a season; but it may be partly a sign of

the season as well as of a natural reaction, that few of the novels which have been published during the past few months belong to the dread historical genus. The truth is, not even pure romance looks its best in the strong light of midsummer; its glamour belongs to the fireside and the softly shaded lamp. In August all this cut-and-thrust business is out of place: it lowers the spirits in the very act of raising the temperature. What we want is life, but the cool life of sanity, well below the fever heat; we resent the artificial stimulation, grateful enough at another season, offered by the licensed victualers of romance. There is no better time to

take one's Jane Austen than while the dog-star burns.

The books which are here recommended for summer reading have this in common: they are not artificial and they are not, with one possible exception, over-intense. They may be counted upon, as a showman may say, to reach the sympathy without tickling the sensibilities, and to stir the brain agreeably without getting upon the nerves.

If he desires the quality of pure effervescence, the reader cannot do better than to take the earliest opportunity of acquaintance with *The Lady Paramount*.¹ He will not find that the level of *The Cardinal's Snuff-box* has been quite reached; but that was not to be expected. It may seem, in spite of our premise, that the conception of this story is a little artificial. In the earlier tale the unlikeliness of the situation was reduced to a minimum without being waived or, a worse error, deprecated. In *The Lady Paramount* a certain loss of delicacy is perceptible, of a distinction dependent on subtleties of sentiment and phrase, a distinction more nearly resembling Sterne's than any other writer's. For one thing the motive is in all respects lighter and broader than that of *The Cardinal's Snuff-box*, though the properties are similar. There is the same Anglo-Italian atmosphere, there are the same delicate descriptions and glancing dialogue. "It was gay June weather, in a deep green English park: a park in the south of England, near the sea, where parks are deepest and greenest, and June weather, when it is n't grave, is gayest. Blackbirds were dropping their liquid notes, thrushes were singing, hidden in the trees. Here and there, in spaces inclosed by hurdles, sheep browsed or drowsed, still faintly a-blush from the shearing. The may was in bloom, the tardy may, and the laburnum. The sun shone ardently, and the air was quick with the fragrant re-

sponses of the earth." In this key the story begins and ends. Susanna, with her piquancy, strength, and beauty, is the younger sister of Mr. Harland's earlier heroine; she and her anticipated move in a similar artfully interrupted solitude for two. But the total effect of the later story is quite different, mainly because at all junctures an unaccountable low-comedy element insists upon thrusting itself forward. It does not matter to the discriminating listener how melodious a serenade may be progressing under one window if somebody is bellowing a ragtime ditty under the next. The affected clown Adrian could very happily be spared from the delightful group at Craford New Manor: altogether delightful except for their compromising toleration of that facetious person. And for the Protestant taste, at least, unable as it is entirely to sink the man in the office, that serving of the mass by Adrian must mar the brief scene in the chapel, the effect of which is otherwise so perfect. Mr. Harland's heroines are a charming type, sparkling and feminine, thoroughly modern, but by no means the latest novelty in womanhood.

It is a little hard to say how they differ from Penelope and Mrs. Wiggin's other vivacious adventuresses. But there is a difference. It may arise partly from the fact that Mr. Harland, being a man, is in love with his own sweet ladies, while Mrs. Wiggin is, through no fault of her own, simply able to see that men might be in love with hers. Certainly her heroines do not lack the quality of sex; if they lack anything of its charm, it is because their femininity is altogether unabashed. A mere man is not sure that he enjoys this humorous exposure of the feminine point of view. He admires the idea of a neat reticence veiling the operations of the feminine mind and heart. It is right for man to blurt, but too free speech in woman connotes a certain baldness, and the glory of a woman is otherwise con-

¹ *The Lady Paramount*. By HENRY HARLAND. New York: John Lane. 1902.

ditioned. The adventures of the Goose Girl at Barbury Green¹ are of the playful Penelope sort, and her comments on life rural and urban have a familiar pungency, not to say impudence. "There is nothing on earth so feminine as a hen," says the Goose Girl unblushingly. We feel that she deserves the rebuke Celia once bestowed upon Rosalind. Rosalind knew how to be flippant at times, but she did not make a business of it.

Having said this, I might well hesitate to name the one among all heroines recently invented, the first sight of whom induces love as a matter of course: the "Virgie" of that very charming story, *The Master of Caxton*.² Virgie is undeniably flippant, often to the point of bad taste, sometimes to the point of barbarity even. But her superiority over the Goose Girl, and over the Lady Paramount as well, is that she is real; not an alias or a fancy, but, with all her faults, an incarnation of the actual human femininity in which, as a rule, the hen and the heroine are equally deficient. What she is speaks eloquently in her favor no matter what her tongue may testify. But how do we know her for what she is? Where do we get this sense of the richness and fineness of a nature which we have many reasons to disapprove of? I suppose we can pretend to answer the question only by conceding the fact that in some indefinable way we feel her to have been created and not invented at all. It is not altogether clear whether her creator grasped her significance or not; whether the comparatively colorless interlocutress, Cassandra Dale, plays the part of foil by design or by accident. Never mind: here is the one vital figure to accept and give thanks for. There are other interesting figures. Mr. Peyton-Call appears at the outset to be a con-

ventional exemplar of patrician indolence, but we are not long in discovering that his lassitude is a rôle and not a true thing. The Dale boys are of strong individuality, especially Bud, like the lilies for beauty and idleness, and a thorough good fellow. The whole story is worthy of gratitude; a clean, simple, straightforward tale.

So is *The Virginian*,³ — and something more. Mr. Wister may be said to have given us a final apotheosis of the cowboy: a type which the author laments in his preface as already obsolete. The Virginian is a figure of splendor, and of splendor all the more irresistible because our recognition of it does not depend upon what the author says about him, though he has a good deal to say. Strong and shrewd, and gentle in all senses except the sense of formal breeding, the Virginian wins his successes fairly by force of character. His early career as we know it at the beginning of the story gives no decided promise of success. He ran away at fourteen, and during the ten years following picked up very little book education. When he falls under the sway of the little schoolmistress and is inspired to read, he retains his practical acuteness, and judges by his own canons. "I have read that play *Othello*," he writes. "No man should write down such a thing. Do you know if it is true? I have seen one worse affair down in Arizona. He killed his little child as well as his wife, but such things should not be put down in fine language for the public. I have read *Romeo and Juliet*. That is beautiful language, but *Romeo* is no man. I like his friend *Mercutio* that gets killed. He is a man. If he had got *Juliet* there would have been no foolishness and trouble." This is the respectable judgment of a man of action, reared in what Mr. Wis-

¹ *The Diary of a Goose Girl*. By KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1902.

² *The Master of Caxton*. By HILDEGARDE

BROOKS. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1902.

³ *The Virginian*. By OWEN WISTER. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1902.

ter calls "the great playground for young men," not holding himself above any of its work or play, and satisfied to refine upon its standards rather than to change them. Some of the cowboy play is decidedly rough, not to say vicious, as the East knows sufficiently well. The Virginian's biographer frankly makes allowance, as in his comment upon a scene in a Rocky Mountain saloon: "Youth untamed sat here for an idle moment, spending easily its hard-earned wages. City saloons rose into my vision, and I instantly preferred this Rocky Mountain place. More of death it undoubtedly saw, but less of vice, than did its New York equivalents. And death is a thing much cleaner than vice. Moreover, it was by no means vice that was written upon these wild and manly faces. Even where baseness was visible, baseness was not uppermost. Daring, laughter, endurance, — these were what I saw upon the countenances of the cowboys. And this very first day of my knowledge of them marks a date with me. For something about them, and the idea of them, smote my American heart, and I have never forgotten it, nor ever shall, as long as I live. In their flesh our natural passions ran tumultuous; but often in their spirit sat hidden a true nobility, and often beneath its unexpected shining their figures took on heroic stature."

Nothing draws one more strongly to the Virginian, the type of this nobility, than his savage health, moral as well as physical. There are, indeed, certain acknowledged facts of his early experience which might be cited to the contrary. "He told me of a Thanksgiving visit to town that he had made with Steve," says the narrator, long after we have learned to trust the Virginian. "'We was just colts then,' he said. He dwelt on their coltish doings, their adventures sought and wrought in the perfect fellowship of youth. 'For Steve and me most always hunted in couples back in them gamesome years,'

he explained. And he fell into the elemental talk of sex; such talk as would be an elk's or tiger's; and spoken so by him, simply and naturally, as we speak of the seasons, or of death, or of any actuality, it was without offense. But it would be offense should I repeat it." The Virginian's code was the code of his fellows. But he was incapable of meanness; he had never, we are sure, harmed a weaker than himself, as he had never (according to an ill-advised phrase to the mother of his betrothed) "killed for pleasure or profit."

If his schoolmistress, Molly Wood, lacks this superb aboriginal simplicity, her New England blood and training are at fault. She cannot quite free herself from conventional qualms, but is essentially fine-grained and sound, fit to be grafted upon this wild offshoot of a good Southern stock. And the great triumphs of her love, first over social, and second over moral fastidiousness, give one the impression of a richer if not more charming personality than Bud Dale's Virgie.

The Wyoming in which the action of Owen Wister's story takes place has much in common with the California of Bret Harte. Substituting cattle for gold, the conditions are very similar: a society of men, a society untrammelled and unaided by the machinery of civilization. But Owen Wister's interpretation of that life is very different from his predecessor's. In his last book,¹ as the title indicates, Bret Harte returned to the trail which he himself had blazed, and which the feet of his successors had turned into one of the thoroughfares of American fiction. There could in the nature of things be only one Luck of Roaring Camp; but the tales here collected retain much of the old flavor, and even renew our acquaintance with ancient favorites, notably Colonel Starbottle and Mr. Hamlin.

¹ *Openings in the Old Trail.* By BRET HARTE. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1902.

Bret Harte's treatment of the character of Jack Hamlin suggests very well his limitations as an interpreter of Western life. He was interested in the people who live in the far West, and in the things which happen there, as a connoisseur in the materials of fiction rather than as a passionate student. We do not, of course, ask for statistics, or a complete philosophy, or a long face, from the creative artist. Mr. Wister offers none of these things. Yet he contrives in the very act of pleasing us to make us think; Bret Harte was content to make us wonder. He was not greatly concerned, therefore, that his reading of that life should be profoundly significant; it must be picturesque. Mr. Jack Hamlin is a rascal under a film of smooth manners. Part of his attraction consists in our knowledge of his rascality, a lure a good many centuries older than Jack Hamlin or Jack Sheppard. Owen Wister's *Virginian* is a gentleman under a coat of roughness. This also is an immemorial type of hero. So far as they are individuals, it is proper that one should get as much pleasure out of one type as out of the other. But the reader can hardly yield to Jack Hamlin and the *Virginian* the immunities of the individual. If the phenomena of the West really interest him, he will find himself considering the claims of each in turn to be taken as representative of the frontier phase of civilization. And weighed in such a mood, Mr. Jack Hamlin, with all his fascinations, is found wanting; one must be lightly pleased with him, or not at all. The *Virginian* (who may never become as famous as Mr. Hamlin) is far more edifying. For all of that young vigorous integrity which Mr. Wister takes to be the sound base of the frontiersman's character is embodied in this healthy, jesting, deeply loving, victorious cowboy of his.

¹ *The Desert and the Sown*. By MARY HALLOCK FOOTE. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1902.

The Desert and the Sown,¹ unlike most of its predecessors by the same hand, can hardly be called a Western story. Part of the action takes place in the West, it is true, but the central figure is Eastern born and bred, and his problem would have been no problem at all to the *Virginian*. Under gross provocation, and then mainly by accident, he kills a man. Human law cannot touch him, but he feels himself under the ban of a higher ruling. He therefore chooses to disappear, though desertion of his young wife and child is involved, and to devote himself to a lifelong penance of solitude. No frontiersman would have brooded over the killing of a man under such circumstances; but this Adam Bogardus, with his inherited rigidity of mind, cannot get away from the fact that according to the code of the East, the only code for him, he is, technically, a criminal. So he suffers, like Hamlet, a bitter penalty for having fallen upon a day for the urgencies of which moral refinement could only disqualify him. With his painful fidelity to his vow, his reluctance to accept favors from the son to whom fortune at last makes him known, and his final renunciation of his tardily restored family, Bogardus comes very near being a tragic figure. We may turn with some relief to a story of far less complication, though a story of the Old World.

*Bread and Wine*² reminds one strongly of some of the peasant idyls of George Sand's. The peasant, hardy as his life is, has almost nothing in common with the frontiersman; his limitations are more difficult to make picturesque, and his virtues are hardly spectacular enough for the purposes of fiction. His qualities are idyllic rather than heroic. Mrs. King's style is sympathetic and restrained, exactly fitted for the treatment of this simple

² *Bread and Wine*. By MAUDE EGERTON KING. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1902.

episode in the married life of her two peasants of Graubünden. It is pleasant to find America producing so delicate an example of the *genre* which the Latins are wont to manage so much better than we. For a taste of the sweetness and purity of its style, we may quote the concluding sentence of the tale: "By this time the twilight sky had deepened and darkened all about the stars so that the eye could see how many and large and bright they were; and night, like an unspoken benediction, came down upon Sertig Dörfli."

To speak of *The Rescue*¹ in this connection would be incongruous if it were not for the simplicity and clarity of manner which it possesses in common with the story of which we have just spoken. Its theme is unusual, and by no means simple; a theme possible only for the student of a sophisticated, not to say decadent society. Henry James might have hit upon it, though his treatment of it would have been more deliberately subtle, and one is not sure that matters would have been allowed to turn out as well as they do. Not that Miss Sedgwick employs the living happy ever after solution; the most sanguine handling could hardly have brought that about. The conclusion is sombre, though it is as favorable as it can well be under the conditions. No special considerations whatever can make the marriage of a man of thirty to a woman of forty-seven a comfortable consummation. It must be in an even stronger sense than usual a beginning rather than an end. But to have brought about such a beginning, so that the fact seems to have some degree of propriety and even palatability, is a rare feat. Perhaps feat is not the word to use, for unusual as the relation between Damier and Madame Vicaud is, it cannot have seemed to the author abnormal or even improbable; and in the end, I think

it does not seem so to the reader. The conception of Claire, one may have two minds about. Bad daughters do sometimes come of good mothers, and the paternity in this case was as bad as it well could have been. But Claire comes dishearteningly near being the totally depraved nature which Shakespeare and experience teach us does not exist. We see in the end that she does not quite achieve this; and we even come to suspect that without the counter-irritant of her mother's intolerable virtue and refinement, her own heart and manners might have developed naturally to a point of respectability at least.

Damier escapes being inconsiderable by virtue of his extreme sensitiveness and the invincible ardor of his feeling for Madame Vicaud. One feels, nevertheless, that in spite of her disadvantage in years and experience, she brings more heart to their union than her young lover is capable of. Their likeness in point of intensity, almost as much as their disparity in years, suggests that as we leave them Madame Vicaud has been rescued, not from trouble altogether, but from futility.

There is a temptation to enlarge a little upon the literary quality of the story. The Virginian would not have cared for it; he probably would have failed to understand Damier, even if he had not classed him with Romeo.

"She pressed his hand, still smiling at him, and then, resuming her sewing, 'Sit near me,' she said, 'so I can see that you are not fancying that I am harsh with you!'

"At such moments he could see in her eyes, that caressed one, made sweetest amends to one, touches of what must once have been enchanting roguishness.

"But I am still going to risk your harshness," he said. . . . 'I don't want to justify man's ways to man; and yet ordinary human nature, with its almost inevitable self-regarding instinct, its climb toward happiness, its ugly

¹ *The Rescue*. By ANNE DOUGLAS SEDGWICK. New York: The Century Company. 1902.

struggle for successful attainment of it, is more successful than cruel toward unhappiness. . . . And then you must remember — I must, for how often I have struggled with these thoughts — that misfortune is a mask, a disguise. One can't be recognized and known when one wears it; one can't show

one's self; if one could there would perhaps be responses.' "

Perhaps it would have been fairer not to quote this. It is like attempting to show the flawlessness of a crystal by knocking off a chip at random. The crystal is marred, and the fragment itself appears insignificant.

H. W. Boynton.

FRENCH MEMOIRS IN ENGLISH.

EVERY additional volume of the Versailles Historical Series — a series now extending in time from Brantôme's Book of the Ladies to the Memoirs of the Prince de Ligne and Count Fersen — deepens the reader's impression of the excellent manner in which the translator and editor and the publishers have worked together to produce in English a social and, in certain aspects, a political history of seventeenth and eighteenth century France drawn from the memoirs and correspondence of those who were a part of the tale they told. Brantôme's *Dames Illustres* is in truth somewhat too early to fit naturally into the scheme, yet no one will be likely to wish it away. The books, attractive in their make-up, are really embellished and enriched by a generous number of well-selected and admirably reproduced portraits, — pictures often pleasingly unhackneyed. Of course Miss Wormeley's most important and difficult task was in dealing with the greatest of all French memoir writers. To reduce Saint-Simon to one fourth of his true size called not only for large omissions, but for much condensation as well. The reader may think that at least one or two volumes more might have been allowed him, but, as it is, Miss Wormeley has done wonders

in retaining so many of the indispensable passages and in keeping the continuity of the narrative. Her merits as a translator no longer need to be dwelt upon; her editorial notes are concise and to the purpose, and more of them would have been welcome. No one, for instance, will be likely to read even an abridgment of Saint-Simon without wishing for some more definite knowledge of his later life than is to be gleaned from scattered hints, for some account of his children and their children, — in short, the after history of the house. And such information can be put in very small compass.

One of the latest volumes of the series is devoted to a selection from those papers of Count Fersen, collected and published by his grandnephew.¹ There is no figure so noble in the court of the last days of old France as the young Swede, in describing whom the much misused word "chivalrous" in its best meaning is instinctively used. As modest as brave, as unassuming as accomplished, honorable, upright, true, in that atmosphere of falsehood and self-seeking, he must have seemed to the girl-queen, the object of his romantic but profoundly respectful admiration, and whose most loyal and devoted friend he

¹ *Diary and Correspondence of Count Axel Fersen, Grand-Marshal of Sweden, relating to the Court of France.* Translated by KATHARINE

PRESCOTT WORMELEY. Boston: Hardy, Pratt & Co. 1902.

was to remain till her life's end, something very like a visitant from another sphere. To the attractive stranger with "the handsomest face, the quickest intelligence" Parisian society showed its most amiable and engaging aspect, but that he "thought nobly and with singular loftiness" was beyond its ken. That a gracious word from the queen was sufficient excuse for calumniating her in a court where all gossip was vile Fersen soon learned, and was thereby strengthened in his resolve to join the expedition to America. As an aide-de-camp to the Comte de Rochambeau he served till the end of the war, and the letters of so clear-sighted an observer have a special interest, when we remember how often the French element in the Revolutionary War has been a subject to treat romantically rather than historically. On parting with his chief, he says, "M. de Rochambeau was the only man capable of commanding us here, and of maintaining that perfect harmony which has reigned between two nations, so different in manners, morals, and language, and who at heart do not like each other." Count Axel, himself, did not learn greatly to like his allies, but he could also view his comrades from the outside.

It is a matter for regret that the fear of a domiciliary visit impelled the friend to whom Fersen had entrusted his diary from 1780 to 1791 to destroy it. Thus were lost his daily notes during the American war, and his observations in the last years of the old order and the first of the great upheaval, — observations of a very competent and sane looker-on, sharing neither the illusions nor the frenzies of the time. Early in 1791 he writes to his father, and after recalling the favors shown him by the king and queen in happier days, he says: "I should be vile and ungrateful if I abandoned them now when they can do nothing more for

me, and while I have still the hope of being useful to them. To all the many kindnesses with which they loaded me they have now added a flattering distinction — that of *confidence*." How well he deserved that trust need not be said. He organized the flight to Varennes, successful so long as he controlled it; later he revisited Paris, at the risk of his life, with new plans; as the representative of his own sovereign, the one disinterested royal friend of the hapless prisoners, he traveled from court to court doing everything that absolute devotion could inspire in a man both wise and capable, fully conscious of the all but treachery of the French princes, the follies of the *émigrés*, the madness in Paris, yet hoping against hope till the long-drawn tragedy ended. And little but disappointment and sorrow were to mark his later years, though he rose to high honor in his own country. But Sweden was torn by dissensions, and the question of the royal succession was the cause of virulent animosities. While Count Fersen was officially superintending a state function, on June 20, 1810, he was torn from his carriage by a body of rioters and tortured to death, — one of the most senseless and brutal of all mob murders. It was the nineteenth anniversary of the flight to Varennes.

All the other works in this collection, whatever may be their biographic interest, are distinctly historical, but the Letters of Mlle. de Lespinasse¹ are emphatically, it may be said poignantly, personal in their appeal. They give us scarcely a glimpse of that salon, where daily gathered encyclopædists, academicians, philosophers, churchmen, distinguished strangers, most brilliant but diverse elements held and harmonized by a woman without beauty, name, or fortune, but with measureless charm, exquisite tact, delicate insight, quick sympathy,

¹ *Letters of Mlle. de Lespinasse*, with Notes on her Life and Character by D'Alembert, Marmontel, De Guibert, etc., and an Introduc-

tion by C. A. Sainte-Beuve. Translated by KATHARINE PRESCOTT WORMELEY. Boston: Hardy, Pratt & Co. 1902.

and, above all, never failing power of drawing forth the best in every guest. Those of her letters which chanced to be preserved are the record, still palpitating with life, of the passion, or, it may be said, the two passions, which like consuming fires burnt away the writer's life. They belong to the little group of the great love-letters of the world, and as in the century that has passed since their publication no earlier attempt has been made to translate them, the volume can be accepted thankfully, even if it stands somewhat by itself among its present

companions. The story of this brilliant and most unhappy woman, vivified by her letters, impresses itself so strongly upon some readers, that they feel a peculiar interest in following the career, yet incomplete, of a contemporary heroine, who appears to be in the intention of her gifted creator a reincarnation in another country and century of Julie de Lespinasse. In considering the degenerate state into which the noble art of historic fiction has fallen, this method of restoring a distinguished figure of the past has much to commend it.

S. M. F.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB.

Verse in
Prose. THERE is an experience in reading which I dare say is very common, but don't remember hearing anybody speak of. You are jogging along comfortably through some quiet prose country, enjoying the fine weather and good plain company, when you are brought up short by an unexpected obstacle in the road, — the noon-day spectre of metre. As if it were n't bad enough to write poetry of purpose, and with plain intent to kill, here we must have the thing doing itself, imposing its marshaled iambs or rearing its horrid front of anapests in the midst of the most humdrum surroundings.

Poets, it is interesting to note, are not likely to make this mistake; they have too much respect for both poetry and prose; they would as soon think of breaking into a two-step at a crowded reception, or going to market in ragtime. It is a pretty frequent slip among prose writers: witness the well-known passages in Lorna Doone, and in Dickens, *passim*; or, to compare small things with great, the opening paragraphs in Mr. Seton-Thompson's recent story of The Kootenay Ram: —

"So in this land of long, long winter night,
Where Nature stints her joys for six hard
months,

Then owns her debt and pays it all at once,
The spring is glorious compensation for
The past. Six months' arrears of joy are paid
In one vast lavish outpour."

And so on; very decent blank verse, such as even a Markham might not be ashamed to sign to.

Now there is, of course, only one thing to be said of such sham prose as this: it is an affront to the ear and to the understanding. Whether he is conscious of it or not, the writer has been guilty of a "break." Yet I must admit that for my part, without believing in metrical prose, or even in rhythmical prose as a set product, my skepticism has a proviso. For now and then in reading the soberest prose, I am conscious of a sudden exquisite thrill such as may follow the lone voice of a bird in the dark, or the discovery of a single pure blossom somewhere among the rocks above the snow line: I have stumbled, that is, on a fragment of pure poetry. And often when I come to examine the few little words which have moved me, I am not able to find much in them but music,

and, as a rule, the formal music of metre. Perhaps the refrain echoes for days upon that inward ear which also has something to do with the bliss of solitude. Sometimes it slowly fades; and sometimes it abides, to develop into some fuller metrical form. And then it is I who must plead guilty.

Reading over FitzGerald's letters not long ago, two such refrains took possession of me. Oddly enough, they both suggested the anapestic measure, with which I believe Old Fitz never meddled; and both eventually shaped themselves into something a little like triolets, not at all like FitzGerald, and, I should say, not very much like me. Never mind: here they are, and the refrains, at least, worth reading: —

I.

Grass will be green, if the tide should be out,

And a seat in the arbor for no one but you;
There will be swallows and robins about:
Grass will be green, if the tide should be out.
Pleasant to wing to the offing, no doubt,

Yet the nether but mimics the loftier blue,

And by sea or by land I have comfort for two:

Grass will be green, if the tide should be out.

II.

I was looking for Keats and I stumbled on Browne,

Browne, the hydriotaphic: a whimsical turn,
I thought, of the die, from a seer to a clown,
"What! a pedant on urns for the Bard of The Urn?"

Nay, then, old Incinerability, burn!"

Half a pace from the hearth I paused — faltered — sat down . . .

Thumbed a leaf — smiled — read on . . . and forgot to return:

I was looking for Keats and I stumbled on Browne.

I WONDER if any readers of the Atlantic will sympathize with me in liking and disliking certain words for their own sake, with a kind of personal feeling. Just as one enjoys or dislikes encountering certain acquaintances from something in themselves, apart from the transactions in which they are encountered, so there

are certain words which it makes me feel better to see, hear, or use; and others which produce exactly the opposite effect.

I do not mean the dislike I have to certain words as ugly and intensive aliens ("furriners" expresses the feeling) which seem taken up by a sort of fad, without any necessity derived from a want in our own tongue. Macaulay has justly commented on the offensiveness of Dryden's putting "fraicheur" for "freshness." But my special aversions in this way are aliens masquerading as natives, and presenting a mien neither one thing nor the other.

"Pedagogy!" What self-respecting teachers can desire their noble calling travestied by this name, uncouth to look at, and uncouth to say, misused Greek passing through unnatural German into bad English! Every one who studies Greek — but that we are told nowadays we should not — knows that a "pedagogue" is not a schoolmaster at all, but the slave who escorted boys to and from school to guard them from immoral associates. One may forgive "pedagogue" in consideration of its always having a certain air of joke, — it just suits Shakespeare's Holofernes. But to think there is any technical propriety in calling the art or science of teaching pedagogy! Granting that we must have a Greek name for a science, the proper word is *pædeutics*, more accurate at once and more euphonious.

And "silhouetted." Are we to be saddled forever with this needless coinage from a French word, which in its own language is remarkably like slang? Every writer seems bound to haul it in by main force. A lover of nature, kept in all day by the raging sun, goes out at the softer hours to gaze on a line of mountain peaks, standing in dark outline against the golden glow of sunset, — and he must needs dub them "silhouetted!" A French noun violently turned into an English participial adjective, — and to what end? with what

profit? A recent writer speaks of General Grant's and General Sherman's profiles "en silhouette." Why not say that their hats were "en chapeau," and their trousers "en pantalon"? The Matterhorn, that awful monster that looks down on Zermatt to see what new climber it may devour, to be spoken of as "parsimonious-French-ministered" against the deep blue!

No! I refer to pure English words, — words we use every day, and cannot possibly dispense with, slipping as they do from our mouths without effort; yet which to me are not mere tokens of thought, but friends and enemies. "Button." I cannot hear or use this word without feeling fidgety. It reminds me of the days when I knew I was a boy, and was treated as a child; when I was dressed and undressed by female hands, and taunted by my elder brother, who dressed himself; a slave and victim to a mass of needless and sordid details in nursery life, devised by a bevy of empresses to exalt their own autocracy and circumscribe my manly liberty. Oh, how blest and exalted in those days seemed to me savages, Romans, Greeks, Arabs, anybody who was not confined by buttons; such an earthborn word. In Scott's magnificent picture of the chivalrous James IV. there is to me a note of repulsion when I read

"His bonnet, all of crimson fair,
Was buttoned with a ruby rare."

Couldn't Sir Walter have made it a stud, or "knop," or anything but a button, — a base thing of horn or bone or cloth — not of ruby?

"Belt." There's a word for you! A grand, manly, classic, chivalrous, athletic word; the symbol of emancipation, of dressing yourself, of the "toga," or rather the "tunica virilis." There is richness and energy in the very sound, the very look. It suggests a man, all succinct and equipped whether for fields of peace or fields of war; his needful garments confined and supported by a band to be proud of. In con-

trast to the monarch described above, how thoroughly satisfactory is Lord William Howard, as he advances — fifty years too soon, indeed — to the siege of Branksome, —

"His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,
Hung in a broad and studded belt;
Whence in rude phrase, the Borderers still
Call noble Howard, 'Belted Will.'"

Gallant John Gilpin trusted to both belt and button; and how much more faithful was the former than the latter! Truly, to one who appreciates the whole force of language words may be enemies or friends.

I HAVE read with interest the experiences of some of your contributors. I venture to give those of another. In the early days of my efforts to reform the world, when I was a somewhat callow youth, I had sent a few articles to leading newspapers. I felt very much gratified and elated when I read them in cold type. The idea that any editor would pay for them had never entered my head. One day I was taking lunch with one of my friends of the newspaper press who got his living by his work, and he asked me how much I charged by the column. "Charge!" said I, "you don't suppose I expect to be paid, do you? I am only a duffer at this sort of thing, and am only too glad to see my articles in print." "But," said my friend, "that's not fair. A man who can write as you do has no business to take our bread from us by serving as a space writer without pay." I did not then know exactly what he meant by "space writer," but I said nothing.

There was a question pending in which I felt a great interest, and when I got home I said to myself, "By Jove! I will write an article for The Atlantic Monthly, and try it on." I will confess that I devoted a whole rainy Sunday to this work of necessity and charity. The words ran off the end of my pen without

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any conscious effort on my part, and as I had never studied English grammar, and always use the shortest words I can find, when I read my article over I thought it was clear and strong, and that every-day business folks who do not care much for philosophic dissertations might get some ideas from it. I had a fair copy made by one of my clerks, and I sent it to the editor. The article was accepted promptly, put in type, and duly appeared. I have forgotten what it was about. When in December I received a check for one hundred dollars I confess that I was astounded! I looked at the check, — I laid it down, — I took it up again and said to myself, "I never earned this money. My double, of whom I have always had an inner consciousness, did this. What would he do with the money?" My double then put an idea into my head that Christmas was coming. I invested the cash in presents for the children and others, to their great delight. But after that I charged for space writing in the newspapers, and put the money mostly into books.

Sequel: The next Christmas was near, and my little girl of about six said, "What are you going to give us for presents this year, papa?" To which I replied, "Not much; I can't spare the money this year." To this the *enfant terrible* responded, "Why don't you write another article for the Atlantic? Anybody can do that!" Presently I received an invitation to dine with the contributors, and when called upon to make a few remarks I began to tell this little story. I had been accustomed to cause some hilarity at dinners of my business friends. You may imagine the shock to my mind when the remark that the hundred dollars did n't seem to belong to me was met by a shout of obloquy and derision. I recovered, and presently I repeated the remark of my little girl, "Anybody can do that!" Then came a turmoil! I was threatened with bottles, pie plates, and other

missiles, but the stern Chairman read the Riot Act, and I escaped without personal injury.

I once knew a little about editors and publishers. I know them a good deal better now. My relations with them have been uniformly pleasant and profitable. When I send out some good copy which one refuses I am very sure that another will take it, and I am rarely mistaken. Having had about forty years' experience of a desultory kind, I have been inclined to turn editor myself as a recreation for old age.

My advice to young contributors who want to instruct their fellows would be:

1. Be sure that you know enough to get your own living by hard work before you begin to write.

2. If you feel an impulse to instruct your fellows, be sure that you know your subject so well that you can make it clear to them.

3. Use the shortest words, but don't try to be literary or make any attempt at style. The subject makes the style if you know it. Set up one William Shakespeare as your model. Omitting proper names and geographical expressions, he averages only four letters to a word, and is unique among writers in using more words of four letters each than of three.

I AM not a millionaire myself. I am not even worried by the prospect of having eventually to face the millionaires' responsibilities, but I do not fail, as I hope, to appreciate their good points. They are, taken as a whole, unostentatious. They are indisputably generous. They are eminently patriotic. But not even their most uncritical admirers can deny that they are sadly deficient in originality. One ought perhaps to qualify this word of disparagement. In the game of Commerce they commonly evince an appalling fertility of resource. But if they showed no more originality in making money than they do in giving it away for charitable purposes they would have

On a Certain
Lack of Ori-
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Millionaires.

remained paupers along with the rest of us. In their philanthropic essays they follow one another like lost sheep, in the same beaten track, endlessly endowing universities, and forever founding public libraries. Their imagination seems atrophied except on the acquisitive side. One picks up the Morning Light only to read that Millionaire A has given two hundred thousand, to build a biological laboratory. One glances at the Evening Shade only to find that Millionaire B has donated another million for a school of veterinary surgery.

The benumbing effect of riches upon the millionaire's faculty of initiative was illustrated recently in striking fashion in the case of Mr. Cecil Rhodes. Here was a man who had, we are told, a genuine contempt for riches merely as riches. His imagination blocked out the map of South Africa before the Muse of History had dipped her pen in her ink bottle. His possessions lifted him beyond "the dreams of avarice." Moreover, he cherished the far-reaching hope of "working" his fellow beings "a perpetual peace." Surely we might expect as the result of Mr. Rhodes's bequests a veritable Jameson raid upon the anti-social foes of humanity. What does he enjoin upon his trustees? To send half a hundred American boys and half a dozen German youths to be educated at that "home of lost causes," the University of Oxford! Somehow or other, benevolence seems to take the nerve out of the millionaire. Sooner or later they all reëcho Robert Morris's plaint, — "Experience hath taught me to be cautious even when trying to do good."

Is there, then, no opportunity for originality or noble venturesomeness in the domain of philanthropy? May the lover of his kind never

"mount to Paradise

By the stairway of Surprise?"

Are colleges and libraries and hospitals and missions to monopolize the business of social betterment? Why not found

an independent Theatre or an incorruptible Press? If the popular æsthetic sense must needs be cultivated, why not found a national Anti-Landscape Advertising League? Are none of the approaches to Utopia untried? Why not institute a propaganda against the use of patent medicines? They are said on good authority to absorb more money annually than the national drink bill; and they fail to give even the momentary exhilaration that must be set to the credit of that poor creature, small beer.

Indeed, the only likely capacity for promising social experimentation that any millionaire has shown of late is Mr. Carnegie's offer to pay the Philippine solatium of twenty millions for the privilege of assuring the Filipinos that they should be free. Mr. Carnegie is on the right track. The big profits from altruistic investments are coming only to those who take big risks, not to those who are content with such Savings Bank interest as the orphan's gratitude or the widow's prayers.

If all this be insufficient to move the phlegmatic millionaire philanthropists, let them reflect upon the history of benevolent and educational foundations. How many of these foundations have outlived a century? Did the French Revolution spare the pious donations of ecclesiastical patrons? How many millions of pounds have been given to benefices in England, and yet how many donors have thereby won themselves an everlasting name? Who besides William of Wykeham? Moth may fret and rust ruin, but the ravages of Confiscation are greater than all. Will our friends, the Socialists, if once they get into the saddle, hesitate to confiscate wealth because it is in the hands of universities, or in the trust funds of public libraries?

The moral of all this is, my dear millionaires, that Fame is difficult to secure and harder to perpetuate; and that Fame builded on the lines of conventional

benevolence cannot be said to be *perennius ære*.

It has been paradoxically affirmed **In Memoriam.** that "no man who deserves a monument ever ought to have one," which is a puzzling way of saying that the deserving man has one already, erected by his genius, his originality, or his philanthropy, and that, in view of this, his friends and countrymen may well refrain from setting up a petty marble slab in memory of the departed.

What is more sadly comic or incongruous than the imposing medley of stone and marble in a great cemetery? The towering columns loom over the resting places of such small citizens. The "dove of peace" alights where it would never have brooded of its free will. The guardian angel bends over the vixen's tomb, while mediocre bits of slate denote the graves of many saintly and gifted pilgrims.

Yet it is best to pause before one attempts to criticise the apparent inconsistency and incongruity and strange misrepresentation spread out before him. Well is it to reflect that these same monuments are not the emblems of the departed, but the insignia of the living.

These awkward blocks and heathen urns and dreadful graven images are the expression of living human hearts. This mournful medley of badly sculptured marbles is but their pitiful endeavor to render final tribute to their beloved ones, and to insure perpetual remembrance of names and dates that mean so much to them.

The monuments have naught to do with those that rest beneath them; they speak not of the travelers gone, but of those left behind. These blocks and columns belong not to the city of the dead, but are the property of living ar-

chitects. They tell us naught of the departed, but merely something of their friends. Have they good taste? Much money? Are they pretentious, or sentimental?

So with the epitaphs. We read them and take note that the remaining relatives were fond of scriptural quotations, or poetry. This composition was done to show the rhymers' skill rather than to set forth the merits of the dead. These sorrowing friends doted on decorative scrolls, those, upon ornamental lettering. The owner of this lot does not forget to bring his individual offering of potted plants, while the proprietor of that grand iron-fenced inclosure leaves the selection of flowers to the gardener.

Let him who gazes at the innumerable monuments of stone and marble fail to exclaim, "Behold the city of the dead!" Rather let him muse on this curious description of the surviving multitude. This inartistic and conglomerate mass of ugly slabs voices their sentiment and pictures them alone.

These are their crude and primitive devices. Some day perchance they will look back upon it all and wonder.

The city of the dead lies all below the surface of the earth, wrapped in the tender folds of nature's burial shroud. Over this peaceful vale mother earth spreads a delicate green verdure. Wild roses waft their fragrance upon the gentle breezes. Up from stout hearts spring sturdy oaks and splendid pines. The weeping willows droop over the gentle sleepers, and maples, birches, and aspens murmur their soothing lullabies above the weary and the heavy laden. Life more abundant and more beautiful everywhere thrills and has its being. This is the city of the dead that are not *dead*, but have awakened.